

*Cavendish Presents*

Abingdon House School

# The Importance of an Integrated Therapy Approach in Our Schools

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# Integrated Therapy

- What is integrated therapy?
- The research and evidence
- In practice at Abingdon House School
- Teacher and student experience
- Questions
- Opportunity to explore the models used at AHS and talk with therapists



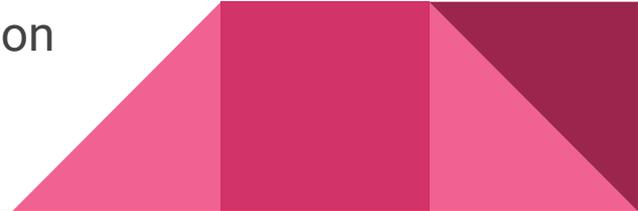


# What is integrated therapy?

Integrated therapy is provided as part of a student's natural setting in the classroom. The therapist might work directly with the pupil, directly with the whole class group or indirectly with staff.

'Holistic, collaborative, child centred approach to educational and therapeutic support' (Hatcher, 2011)

The key principle is that the therapist is working in collaboration with the school staff and students. Everyone shares their knowledge and expertise in order to support the academic achievement and social participation of all students.





# Alternatives to integrated therapy

- External independent therapy provided outside of school, off site
- External independent therapy provided on site, usually out of class
- Therapist as part of the school team providing therapy as withdrawal, out of class sessions





# Integrated therapy - research and evidence

## Hazelgrove (1998) - What is Integrated Therapy?

'In integrated therapy, a student's related service needs are planned, provided, and assessed ecologically, in natural settings, across disciplines.'

'Skills are found and thus addressed in the clusters which serve functions in a student's real life.'

'The IEP is collaboratively written and priority skills are determined for student participation, functional independence, and overall benefit from the educational program.'



# Integrated Therapy - Research and Evidence

## McWilliam and Scott (2001) - Why integrated therapy works for everyone:

- Students learn skills in the place they will use them
- Teachers can see and implement strategies
- Therapist can see if strategy suitable
- When therapy is provided in the classroom therapists and teachers consult 4 times more
- Across therapy disciplines children generalise more following in-class than out-of-class therapy

*Over time families who were given choice of in-class and out-of-class models preferred in-class*



# Integrated therapy - research and evidence

## Hernandez and Haskell (2013) - what is successful integrated therapy?

- Research took place in a pre-school environment
- Integrated therapy needs interpersonal and organisational capacity
- Organisational capacity to support the collaboration between providers
- Integrated therapy improves collaboration between the whole team
- Successful integrated therapy:
  - Open communication, mutual trust, professional confidence
  - All professionals involved must have a professional confidence
  - Time needed for collaboration
  - Collective competence

# Abingdon House School



Students aged 5 to 17 (key stage 1 to 4)

9 classes - each staffed with a teacher and teaching assistant

## Therapy Team

- 1 Physiotherapist
- 3 Speech and Language Therapists
- 3 Occupational Therapists
- Therapy Assistant
- Cognitive Behavioural Therapist



# Core Therapy Provision

Therapy is provided as an integrated part of the education at Abingdon House School rather than as an additional service.

Group therapy sessions of Occupational Therapy, Speech and Language Therapy and Physiotherapy are provided weekly for 35 weeks of the year.





# Occupational Therapy Core Provision

Weekly class support for handwriting/self regulation in English

## **Key Stage 1&2**

Weekly class group focusing on fine motor skills and sensory

Weekly Life Skills Class Group (joint with SaLT)

## **Key Stage 3&4**

Weekly Life Skills/Social Skills Class Group by a qualified Speech and Language Therapist and/or OT

# Speech and Language Therapy Core Provision

Weekly class support in English

## **Key Stage 1&2**

Weekly class Social Skills Group

Weekly Life Skills Class Group (joint with OT)

## **Key Stage 3&4**

Weekly Life Skills/Social Skills Class Group by a qualified Speech and Language Therapist and/or OT





# Physiotherapy Core Provision

Weekly class group with a qualified physiotherapist

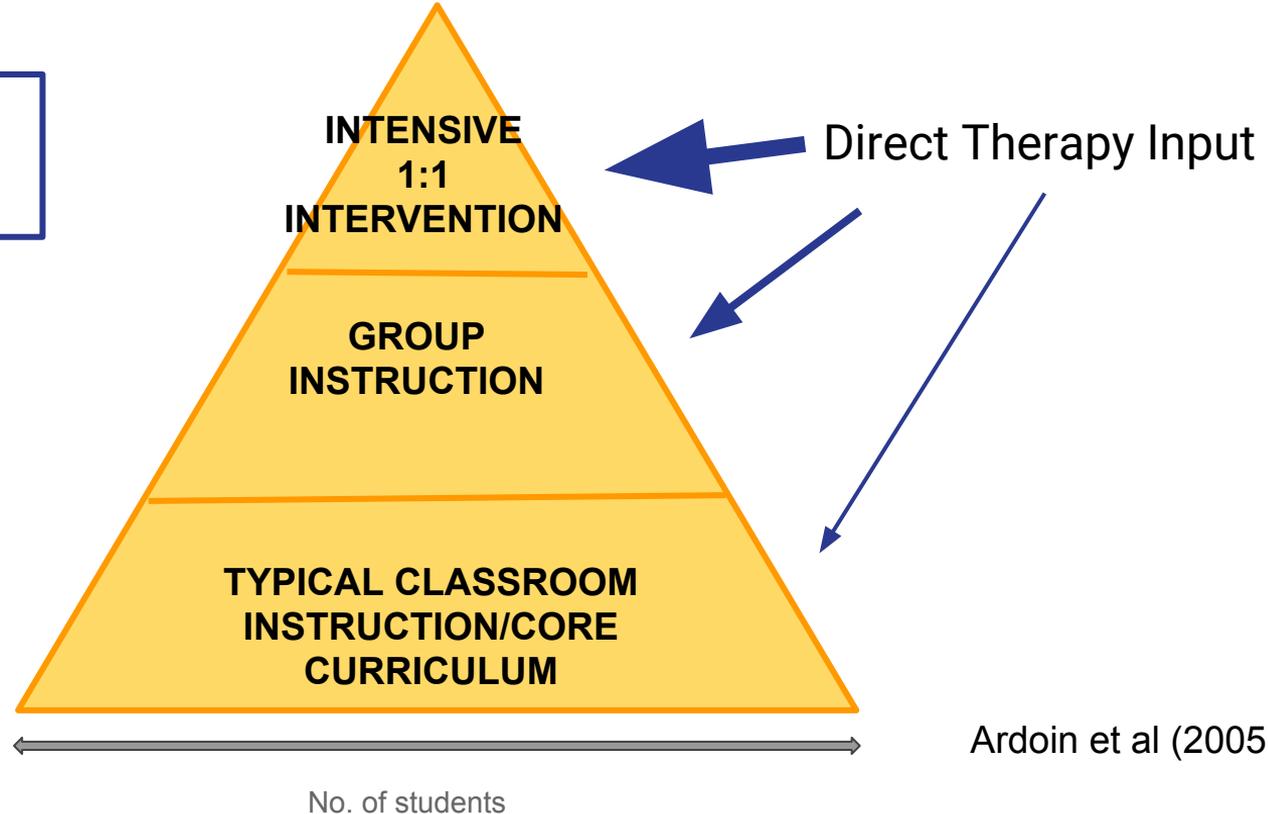
- Some sessions led by physiotherapist
- Others (particularly in KS4) led jointly by physiotherapist and sports teacher
- Joint PT/sports sessions allow:
  - close monitoring of motor skill development during sports sessions
  - joint working where PT can focus on developing underlying skill/strength while sports teacher develops further and applies to sports curriculum
  - differentiation of groups by need or area of focus - breakout group or sessions run in parallel
  - support for particular individuals who may require extra input or alternative activities during general sports session

# Therapy School Tiered Model



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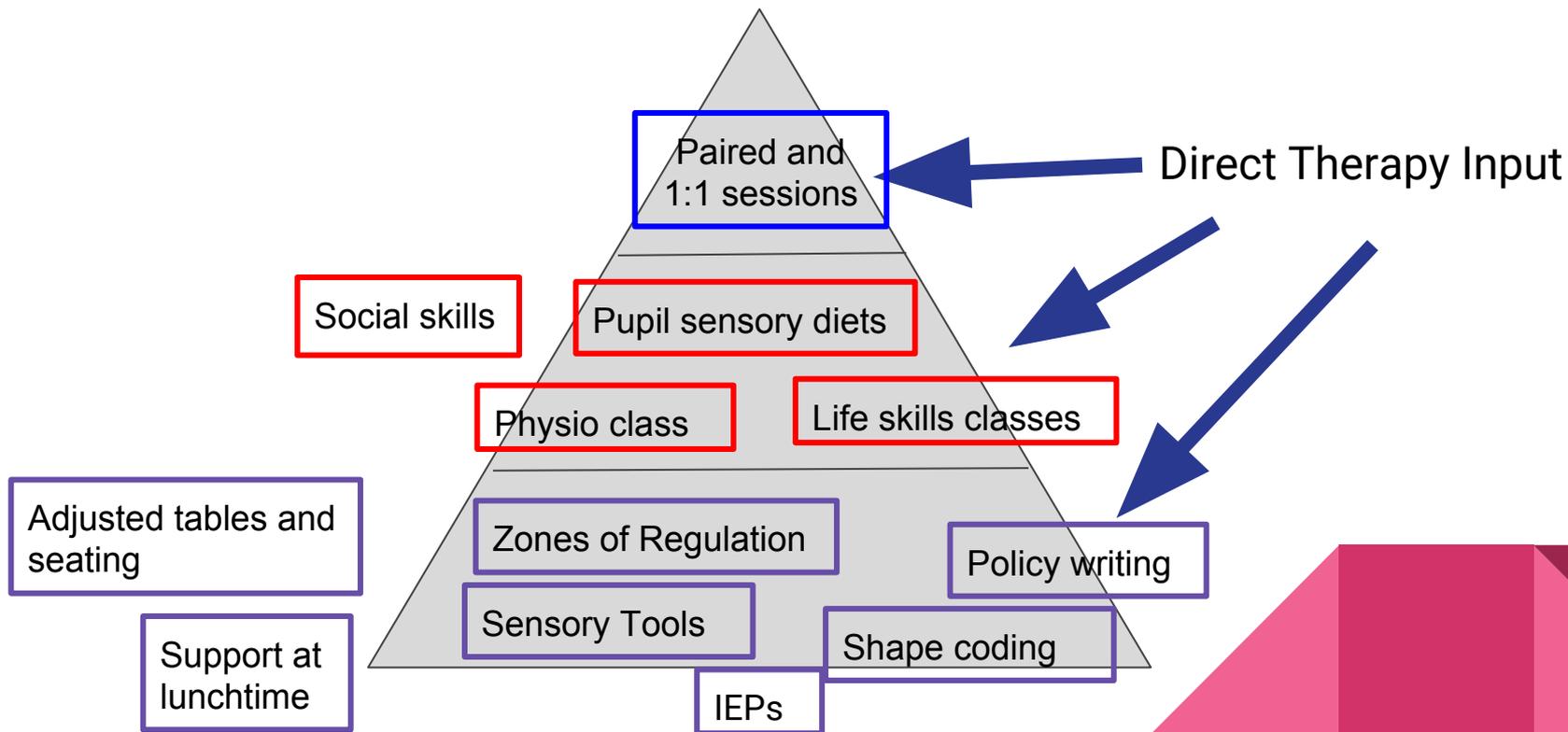
Mainstream  
School



Ardoin et al (2005)



# School tiered model at AHS





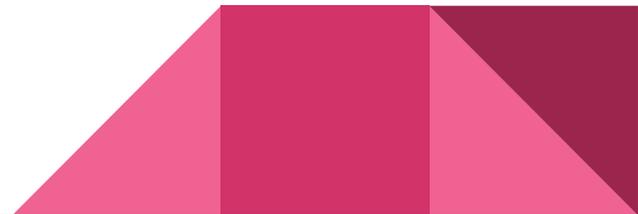
# Skill development across the tiers at AHS

## *Example*

## **OT support in developing handwriting**

### Core Curriculum

- all pupils have an OT supporting their class once a week focusing on handwriting
- all pupils have assessment of seating and desk height (physio)
- Input to handwriting and examination policies



# Tiered approach - an example

## Group

- Writing slopes, pencil grips and other equipment
- Visual prompts for posture
- Handwriting warm ups
- Pre writing skills
- Speed Up/ Handwriting without Tears/Write Dance delivered to a class
- Handwriting guideline sheets given to younger pupils



## 1:1/Paired

- Block of weekly paired sessions focusing on handwriting
- Handwriting assessments e.g. DASH



# Tiered approach - an example

## SaLT support in developing social skills

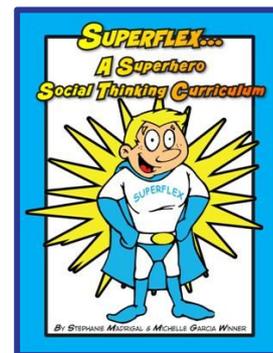
### Core Curriculum

- All pupils have an SaLT supporting their class once a week focusing on social skills
- Whole school vocabulary around social skills, in particular Social Thinking vocabulary e.g. expected/unexpected behaviours, whole body listening
- All pupils' social skills are screened by the class SaLT at the start of each academic year

# Tiered approach - an example



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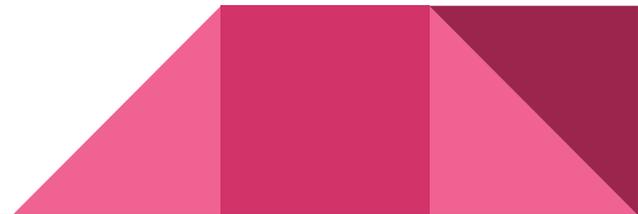


## Group

- Social stories for specific groups of children e.g. before sports day
- Social Thinking language specific to classes
- Visual prompts for social skills e.g. whole body listening posters
- Specific programmes suited to specific groups of children e.g. Social Thinking, Talkabout, So Safe
- Social skills groups run by Therapy Assistant

## 1:1/Paired

- Block of weekly paired sessions focusing on social skills
- Individual social stories
- Social skill assessments e.g. CELF-4 UK pragmatics profile



# Integrated therapy across the school day



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# Integrated therapy across the school day

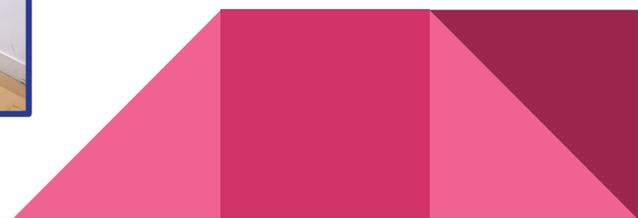
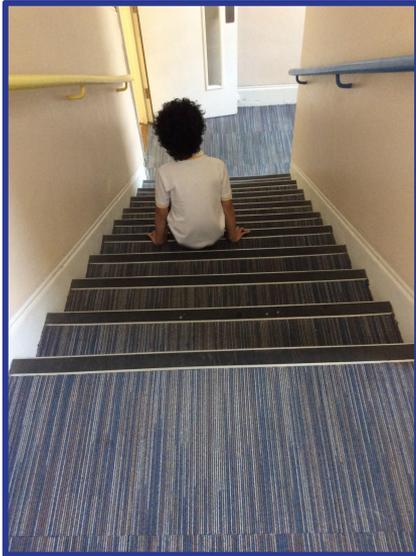


# Integrated therapy across the school day



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## Sensory circuits and movement breaks



# Integrating therapy into school events



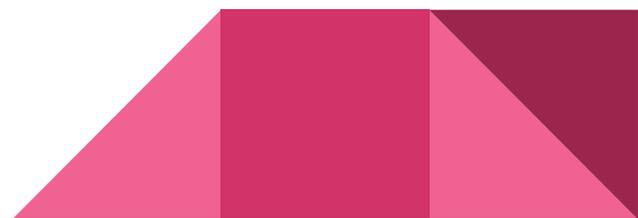
Residential Trip



Sports Day



Sponsored  
walk / run





# Training provided for staff

Regular training provided for staff on a variety of therapeutic interventions

Training can be provided as needed and about specific student situations

“We, as a school, are extremely lucky to have such highly qualified and experienced therapists to share strategies that will help us meet the needs of our children. As a new TA here at Abingdon, I found the twilight training sessions that were delivered by the therapists very informative which transformed how I communicated and interacted with the children. I felt empowered to recognise when a child needed a therapeutic input and understood the benefits behind the strategies.” *Teaching Assistant*





# Integrating classwork into therapy

- Consistent behaviour system used in therapy sessions as well as class
- Assessment new pupils
- Joint reporting system
- Google classroom to set whole class work and homework
- FROG - using the same target system for monitoring progress as class teachers
- Using classwork in therapy sessions



“The fact that the therapists are integral members of the staff and participate fully in the school provides an outstanding two way understanding between therapy and education which is integral to our students' development. We are also able to provide a more holistic support system for our families.” *Teacher*

# Experience of integrated therapy in English

## Speech and Language Therapy

Shape coding to support sentence construction

## Occupational Therapy

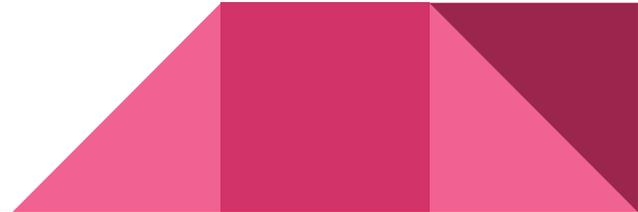
Writing sentences onto sky, grass, ground paper



# Experience of integrated therapy in English



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# Experience of integrated therapy in English

KS4 class





# Experience of integrated therapy in English

“Integrated therapy works well for my class....Having the speech and language therapist we are able to support the pupils to breakdown comprehension questions through methods such as the use of shape coding.

Integrated support from the OT, we encourage the pupils to have an accurate pencil grip, posture and effective fine motor skills e.g. handwriting. We practise our spellings of the week by writing out our words on handwriting paper or other fine motor resources such as putty, sand or rice.”

*AHS Teacher*





# Integrated therapy developing life skills

- Weekly life skills lessons - led by SaLT and OT and supported by class TA.
  - *Working on independent living skills applicable to school life and future adult life*
- Support in dining hall and play time at lunch - developing social skills, regulation, sequencing and cutlery skill

*As teachers TAs and therapists are also on duties, carry-over into unstructured times means pupils can practice their learning with support in real life situations*
- Working towards life skills targets set jointly with teachers  
e.g. pack school bag, organise homework, put on coat

# Integrated therapy developing life skills



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# Integrated therapy developing life skills



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## Typical day in the life AHS integrated therapies

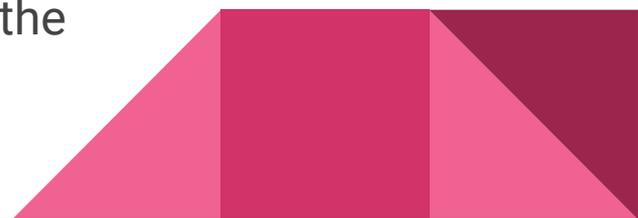
Hannah arrives in the morning - teacher uses Zones of Regulation to check in with her and help her identify a regulating strategy

During English the speech and language therapist supports in the classroom as the class do work on 'word of the week'



At lunchtime in the dining hall one of the members of staff on duty is the OT who helps Hannah to hold her cutlery properly when she is cutting up her food

One of Hannah's afternoon lessons is PE which is led by the sports teacher but supported by the physiotherapist who works with each child on their core strength

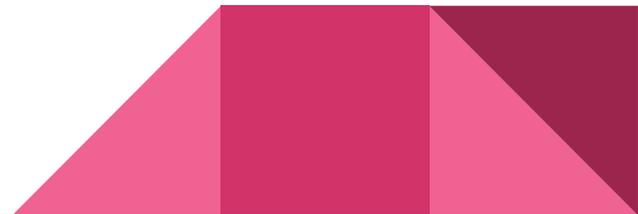




## Typical day in the life AHS integrated therapies (ctd)

Enrichment at the end of the day is a board games club led by a speech and language therapist and teaching assistant supporting the pupils in communicating with each other appropriately while playing

After Hannah has gone home there is a staff meeting where one of the items discussed is the upcoming end of term performance. The speech and language therapist helps to ensure the social story about the event is written at an understandable level for Hannah's class and the OT supports the staff to identify suitable sensory strategies.





# The IEP process

Set of targets to reflect 'each student's holistic, functional needs' (Hatcher, 2011)

- Class conferences - whole team meet to discuss students progress and set next IEP targets
- Allows for IEP targets set in each section to be a collaboration between teaching staff, therapists, parents/carers and students

'The IEP is collaboratively written and priority skills are determined for student participation, functional independence, and overall benefit from the educational program.' Hazelgrove (1998)



# The IEP process

X will use a sensory activity when in the yellow zone and beginning to withdraw from classroom activities with one adult prompt.

## OT, SaLT and Teaching Staff

- The class teacher to use a sensory diet throughout the day so that his sensory needs can be addressed.
- Regular movement breaks are recommended during the school day to help with his concentration levels during lessons.
- Reinforcement of zones of regulation model, use with class at beginning of the lesson
- Class OT sessions



# The IEP Process

X will consistently use 3-4 word sentences when communicating with peers and adults

## SaLT and Teaching Staff

- Colourful semantics resources
- Vocabulary instruction and practice
- Model and extend X#s sentences e.g. if X says 'ball', model 'blue ball' back to her
- Whole class guided language sessions a minimum of twice a week.



# The IEP process

X will stop a moving ball with their foot and return it to a partner five times in a row

## Physiotherapy and Teaching Staff

- Physiotherapy support in Sports lessons
- 1:1 Physiotherapy input
- Class sensory diet
- Regular movement breaks





# Why we think integrated therapy works

“Means that input can respond rapidly and tweaked according to needs of the pupil and growing acquisition of skills - rather than waiting for feedback to teaching staff through formal reporting systems at the end of blocks of provision”

“Supports self-esteem by not withdrawing pupils from learning with their peers. Lessons are not missed, so no gaps in academic content”

“As a classroom teacher, it helps me consider 'blind spots' - the things that your regular academic planning doesn't necessarily cover. Positioning of the room, semantic choices in questions and the emotional impact of my ongoing feedback on each individual - just some of the things that help to create a more inclusive teaching environment”



# Why we think integrated therapy works

“Our pupils are often good at learning skills/acquiring techniques, but weak executive functioning limits their ability apply learning across contexts. Integration of therapy allows skills to be practiced in a functional way for both life and learning” *Teacher*

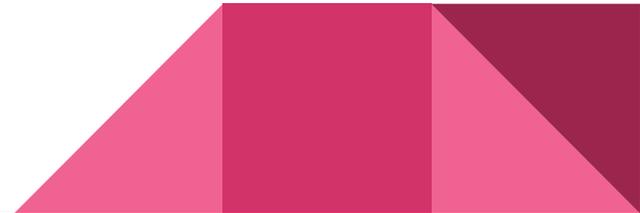
“From a therapist's perspective it enables a more detailed understanding of not only the students, but also the curriculum and barriers that students face to accessing this in the classroom. Monitoring targets and assessing whether they are being generalised is much easier. I also feel much more involved in school life, meaning that relationships with teachers are stronger and there is more two-way sharing of ideas, goals and strategies. Everyday I spend time talking to teachers about specific pupils, something that just isn't as easy in a withdrawal model.” *Therapist*

# Students



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“For the students, this integrated therapeutic approach provides a very smooth and joined up educational experience. They are able to generalise what they are learning in therapy across all areas of their schooling. Therapy is not seen as an addition to their education, but an integral part of it. The students do not need to feel centred out by being removed for their therapies which creates a wonderful atmosphere of normalcy, tolerance, and understanding of others. This also has a very big benefit to their development of confidence and self esteem. Therapy and teaching can be relevant and take into consideration what the child is currently experiencing, and we can react more quickly through this approach to best support the student.” *Teacher*

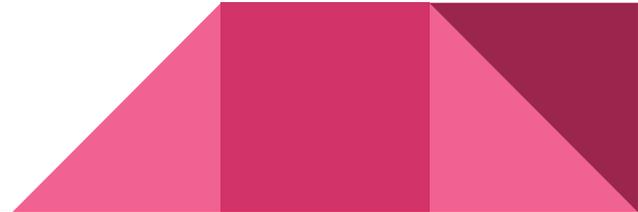




# CReSTed Comments

'The integrated therapy is an example of what can be achieved when professionals work together'

'Having everyone under one roof, means a more holistic approach' *Parent*





# References

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