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Job Description

**Function:** Children Services

Job title: Therapy Assistant

Reports to: Speech and Language Therapist

**Main purpose of the job**

The Therapy Assistant will provide input for pupils within Autism Anglia’s Doucecroft school under the guidance of a Speech and Language Therapist and Occupational Therapist. They will participate in the continuing development of these services as agreed with the therapists and therapy lead.

The therapy assistant will assist in promoting professional expertise for staff at Doucecroft School to develop the communication and regulation awareness of our learners.

You will work with autistic children and young adults, some of whom also have a co-existing mental health or learning difficulties.

Day-to-day duties will include:

* Working under the supervision of Speech and Language Therapist and guidance of an Occupational Therapist as part of a multi-disciplinary team.
* Working with pupils on a one-to-one, group or class basis.
* Supporting class staff
* Planning and leading group work and activities.
* Preparing therapy rooms and equipment.

## Specific Responsibilities

1. To support the management of a defined caseload as agreed by Speech and Language Therapists and occupational therapists
2. To provide individual and group speech and language therapy to learners as determined by Speech and Language Therapists
3. To provide individual and group occupational therapy to learners as determined by the Occupational Therapists (initially the focus will be Speech therapy however the role will become more generic with both SLT and OT input being offered).
4. To provide indirect support (for example providing visual timetables/schedules, regulation strategies etc.) to promote an accessible and communication / sensory friendly environment.
5. To provide specialist advice to staff, carers and relatives as appropriate.
6. To liaise with the multi-disciplinary team to implement individualised therapy programmes.
7. To liaise with all involved professionals and relatives as appropriate to the management of the individual learner.
8. To keep accurate and informative case notes and contribute to clinical audit within the Therapy Service.
9. To seek out information/developments in the area of autism.
10. To disseminate updated research information to professionals and relatives.
11. To attend training in order to maintain knowledge of developments in the general area of therapy and the specific area of autism.

**Teaching, Training and Supervision**

1. To receive regular supervision from a Speech and Language Therapist and follow guidance form an Occupational Therapist.
2. To provide appropriate training workshops to teaching staff.
3. To contribute to the development of communication / regulation training packages for Children’s services.

**Management, Recruitment Policy and Service Development**

1. To contribute to the development, evaluation and monitoring of the team’s operational policies and services, through the deployment of professional skills in research, service evaluation and audit.
2. To advise the Therapists on those aspects of the service where matters need addressing.
3. To liaise with Therapists in the area employed by other agencies, in order to make maximum use of local support networks, resources and training.

**General Responsibilities**

1. To co-operate with all Autism Anglia staff in maintaining good relationships with outside agencies and the general public in order to uphold Autism Anglia’s image and win increased support for its work.
2. To promote a positive image of autism, Autism Anglia and the services it provides.
3. Ensure that your conduct within and outside the organisation does not conflict with professional expectations of Autism Anglia.
4. To follow the policies of Autism Anglia and ensure that all staff follow these policies.
5. Attend meetings and training as required.
6. Ensure the respect, dignity and right to privacy of the people we support as far as possible.
7. Carry out any other duties as are within the scope, spirit and purpose of the job, the title and grading of the post, as requested by your Line Manager or his/her higher level of authority.
8. Take personal responsibility and act within the spirit, principles and values of the Charity.
9. It is expected that all staff members demonstrate their commitment to providing an excellent standard of support to the individuals who utilise our services. In addition to this it is expected that a positive role model will be displayed at all times to both the people that we support and work colleagues.
10. Its an expectation that all staff should work towards maintaining and exceeding performance indicators to at least the competent level which is relevant to their role.

**Confidentiality**

You will be expected to maintain confidentiality for all aspects of Autism Anglia, its learners, staff and its work. The nature of the work entrusts people with confidential information about children/young people, their families/carers and staff. Any breach of this confidentiality will constitute gross misconduct.

This job description encompasses and reflects the role expectations currently identified as requirements of the post. However as the needs of the people we support change over time and legislation and regulatory influences impact on the organisation, the expectations identified within this job description may change. In addition, Autism Anglia strives to maintain a high standard of performance from all staff and changes may need to be implemented to reflect best practice. Alterations to the expectations that Autism Anglia has of staff will be discussed with the staff member and introduced in consultation with the post holder.

Signed: …………………………………………… Date: …………………………….

**Person Specification**

**Education and qualifications**

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| **Essential** | **Desirable** |
| 4 or 5 GCSEs (A\* to C) or equivalent. | Voluntary or paid experience of working with autistic individuals, and mental health, or learning difficulties. |

**Knowledge and Experience**

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| **Essential** |
| Experience of working with autistic individuals |
| Experience of working with people with severe learning difficulties |
| Experience of working with people who may demonstrate ‘distressed behaviour’ |
| Willingness and desire to develop knowledge of autism. |

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| **Desirable** |
| Previous experience working within a school environment. |
| Previous experience as a Speech and Language Assistant or occupational therapy assistant or Learning Support Assistant. |

**Practical Skills and Abilities**

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| **Essential** |
| A caring and understanding approach. |
| Excellent communication skills, and the ability to explain interventions or strategies to autistic individual’s and/or their carers. |
| Good organisational skills. |
| Good interpersonal skills and a commitment to teamwork. |
| Empathy and the ability to gain the trust and confidence of autistic people. |
| The ability to work under the supervision of the Speech and Language Therapist, as part of a team and also autonomously. |
| The ability to relate to autistic individuals, their relatives, staff and other professionals. |