

Health & Safety Risk Assessment: Play Therapy

JFrostplaytherapy endeavours to comply with all relevant legislation and Play Therapy UK (PTUK) guidance. This risk assessment will be implemented in conjunction with the relevant policies of the school/organisation in which the Play Therapy is taking place.

Business name: JFrostplaytherapy				Name of assessor: Jessica Frost			
Date of risk assessment: January 2023. Reviewed January 2024.				Date of next review: January 2025			
Hazard (Something with a potential to cause harm)	Who might be harmed and how?	Measures taken to mitigate risk	Further action required to control risks	Actions to be completed by	Risk Value (S x L)		
					Severity	Likelihood	Risk Factor
Possible hazards within the therapeutic environment							
Injury caused by slips, falls, trips	Clients Play Therapist	Play Therapist to ensure the playroom is free from obvious risks prior to each session. Play Therapist to ensure the playroom is free from obstructions during sessions as far as possible, whilst leaving room for messy play which can be part of the recognised therapeutic process. First Aid support to be provided by school or organisation where Play Therapy is taking place, if required.	Ongoing monitoring of risk.	Jess Frost	1	2	2
Injury caused by manual handling of equipment	Play Therapist	Wheeled storage used to transport equipment wherever possible. Heavy objects in situ or stored low level where possible. Play Therapist to have an awareness of correct manual handling techniques.	Ongoing monitoring of risk.	Jess Frost	1	1	2

		First Aid support to be provided by school or organisation where Play Therapy is taking place, if required.					
Injury caused by therapy equipment. E.g. scissors, broken equipment	Clients Play Therapist	<p>Play Therapist to check the condition of all equipment weekly.</p> <p>Play Therapist to make an assessment of the client's frame of mind and presenting risk in relation to use of scissors or other items which may carry higher risk. Only children's safety scissors will be used.</p> <p>First Aid support to be provided by school or organisation where Play Therapy is taking place, if required.</p> <p>For sessions taking place in private practice or KidsAid therapy room, accompanying adult to administer first aid. Play Therapist to complete HSE Compliant Accident rereport Book.</p>	Ongoing monitoring of risk.	Jess Frost	1	1	1
Allergic reaction to materials used within the therapeutic toolkit.	Client	<p>Play Therapist to ensure non-toxic paint is used within the therapeutic toolkit and that all creative materials used are appropriate and safe for use by children.</p> <p>Play Therapist to ask parents about any allergies (food or otherwise) a client may have within the parent interview which takes place before commencing therapy. A snack is sometimes part of the celebration of therapy during the final session, where appropriate and chosen by the child.</p> <p>In the case of a client presenting with an apparent allergic reaction additional support will be sought immediately within the school/organisation where the Play Therapy is taking place.</p> <p>Play Therapist to ensure their own allergies are not triggered by anything in the therapeutic toolkit.</p> <p>First Aid support to be provided by school or organisation where Play Therapy is taking place, if required.</p>	Ongoing monitoring of risk.	Jess Frost	1	1	1
Risk of contracting COVID-19	Client Play Therapist	The Play Therapist will ensure sessions are conducted in line with the school/organisation's COVID-19 procedures and relevant government guidance.	Ongoing monitoring of risk	Jess Frost	1	1	1

		<p>The Play Therapist will ensure regular antibacterial cleaning of the therapeutic toolkit where possible.</p> <p>The Play Therapist will encourage hand washing as required or use of alcohol gel if required.</p>					
Risk of Fire	Clients Play Therapist	<p>No naked flames will be available in the playroom as part of the therapeutic toolkit.</p> <p>Play Therapist and clients to follow the school/organisation/building procedures in the event of fire.</p>	Ongoing monitoring of risk	Jess Frost			
Possible hazards within therapy sessions							
Risks associated with working 1:1. E.g. Touch, Inappropriate behaviour from client, sexualised behaviour from client, physical assault by client.	Client Play Therapist	<p>Touch has great healing potential when used with care and introspection, especially when working with attachment disruption and early developmental trauma.</p> <p>Play Therapist to ensure a thorough handover of each client's presenting risks prior to commencing therapy sessions, from teachers, parents/carers or others as appropriate.</p> <p>If the client's presenting risks differ from those usually expected an individual risk assessment will be completed prior to commencing therapy.</p> <p>The Play Therapist will respond to any inappropriate behaviour, sexualised behaviour or physical assault with a calm manner, understanding language and clear boundaries, moving further away from the client if required or gently guiding the client (or their limbs) away from the therapist as required. The Play Therapist will seek additional support if required from an available member of staff/attending adult.</p>	Ongoing monitoring of risk.	Jess Frost	2	1	2
Risk of a child leaving a session during a session or not returning to class	Clients	<p>If the client's presenting risks differ from those usually expected an individual risk assessment will be completed prior to commencing therapy.</p> <p>In the case of a client absenting themselves from a session the Play Therapist will watch them at a distance back to their class and handover to a member of teaching staff.</p> <p>If the client runs off elsewhere the Play Therapist will make a visual assessment of safety and if no second adult is nearby to call for support, they will leave the child briefly to inform a member of staff. If it is not assessed as</p>	Ongoing monitoring of risk.	Jess Frost	1	1	1

		<p>safe to leave the child the Play Therapist will remain close by, trying to keep a visual on the child, offering verbal support and waiting until it is possible to call for or get some additional support.</p> <p>At the KidsAid therapy room, the exit from the building is past their accompanying adult where handover can take place.</p>					
Risk of confidentiality of session being breached. E.g. interruptions	Clients	<p>The Play Therapist will ensure the playroom provides acceptable levels of confidentiality for clients and will communicate to staff within the school/organisation that sessions are confidential and should not be interrupted unless it is an emergency.</p> <p>Each school/organisation shall be provided with a Service Level Agreement and supporting information to outline the conditions needed for therapy sessions to commence.</p>	Ongoing monitoring of risk.	Jess Frost	2	1	2
Risk of allegations made against Play Therapist	Play Therapist	<p>Play Therapy sessions usually take place 1-1 or in small groups, without the presence of another adult. If a child makes an allegation against the Play Therapist, the therapist will end the session immediately and the therapist will cease working 1-1 with the child as soon as possible i.e. they will leave the room to find another adult who can support the child.</p> <p>The Play Therapist will ensure that any allegation made against the therapist is reported to the school/organisation's DSL without delay, and an assessment will be made as to whether sessions with other children will continue, depending on the nature of the allegation.</p> <p>Play Therapist to ensure a thorough handover of each client's presenting risks prior to commencing therapy sessions, from teachers, parents/carers or others as appropriate.</p> <p>If a client has a history of making allegations the Play Therapist will ensure a thorough risk assessment is produced in partnership with the school/organisation prior to deciding together whether it is safe to commence sessions.</p>	Ongoing monitoring of risk	Jess Frost	2	1	2

		<i>It is also important to note that children may at times make allegations about others in preparation for making a disclosure.</i>					
Other Risks							
Risk of data breach or loss	Client Client's family/carers Play Therapist	<p>Play Therapist to ensure all data is carefully handled and securely stored through the use of encrypted digital storage and Play Therapy UK's online data management system (Fortuna).</p> <p>Play Therapist to ensure that any sensitive documents requiring sending via e-mail will be done with password protection.</p> <p>Play Therapist will ensure that any paper copies are scanned and uploaded to digital storage as soon as reasonably possible and originals then destroyed.</p> <p><i>See JFrostPlayTherapy GDPR policy.</i></p>	Ongoing monitoring of risk.	Jess Frost	2	1	2
Risk of stress	Play Therapist	<p>Play Therapist to ensure they have regular supervision to process the emotional impact of the work.</p> <p>See : PTUK Ethical Framework</p>	Ongoing monitoring of risk.	Jess Frost	1	1	1

This risk assessment will be reviewed annually or as required.

Review log: January 2024. By Jessica Frost.