



**Muntham House School**



**THERAPY HUBS**

# Principal's Welcome

I am delighted to welcome you to Muntham House School's Therapy Hubs Outreach report. Muntham House School is one of the leading specialist schools in the country, located within 23 acres of picturesque West Sussex countryside and a truly unique environment. We have a Specialist Centre for Therapy and Counselling and a large team of highly qualified therapeutic staff.

I hope you are able to obtain everything you need from this brochure; however, please feel free to get in touch with our Head of Therapy, Shona Puttick or myself if you require further information.

Mr Harry Anderson  
Principal



# Therapy Hubs

Therapy Hubs was set up in 2021 following the COVID-19 pandemic. There had been a considerable spike in mental health issues and concerns across the country, particularly in West Sussex, where there had unfortunately been a number of suicides among pupils attending mainstream schools. The impact that this had on their friends and the school communities was worrying.

Therapy Hubs was created to provide therapy and support for these pupils and others who were suffering from mental health concerns and anxiety following the pandemic. After a series of meetings with the SENCO (Special Educational Needs Coordinators) and Head Teachers from local schools, the program was established. The four schools involved in the program were:

- The Weald
- Tanbridge House
- Bohunt
- Forest

Two places were offered to each of the four partnership schools for half a term, providing a place each year for pupils with high needs from each school. Many of these pupils were at risk of permanent exclusions as schools could not meet their mental health needs. Qualified Counsellors and Therapists already working at Muntham House School were allocated to the Therapy Hubs programme for one day per week.



# Therapy Hubs

Due to the program's success we were contacted by primary schools that also needed support. A primary approach/model to Therapy Hubs was designed with a carousel of activities where SEN children from local primary schools or those who had been recognised as having mental health issues or concerns, were invited to participate in the programme. Twelve children from these schools were invited to Muntham House for a day of therapeutic activities.

The local primary schools who we have worked with are as follows:

- Billingshurst Primary
- Southwater Junior Academy
- Three Bridges Primary
- Downsview Primary
- Trafalgar Primary
- Heron Way Primary

A group of children from each of these schools would come to Muntham House School during one of our INSET days and participate in Therapeutic activities for the whole day. The activities on offer were designed so that staff from each school could learn about them and take them back to their own schools. The activities were as follows:

- Lego Therapy
- Sensory Play
- Animal Therapy
- Play Therapy
- Forest Schools



# SUCCESSFUL OUTCOMES

The Therapy Hubs programme has been remarkably successful, surpassing our expectations in all areas. The project was ambitious; however, the results and impact for pupils participating, their families, and schools were remarkable and in fact, life-changing for some. All children involved in the project have attended their outreach sessions, and many of the pupils have improved attendance within their own mainstream schools since attending the Therapy Hubs project.

Here is an example of the pupils' feedback:

*'I love coming here, it's the only time I have to sit down and have time to talk'*  
*'This is the only space where I can be me and not worry about everyone else'*  
*'There are two people in my life that are safe and stable, and you are one of them'*

Parents and carers were provided with a questionnaire based on the GAD-7 Anxiety questionnaire.

- Results from pupils were 100% positive
- Results from parents were 100% positive

Feedback from schools showed an increase in attendance among pupils participating in the Therapy Hubs programme. Secondary schools also reported an increase in academic progress for those pupils involved in the programme. Feedback from parents and carers involved in the project -

*'The staff here fully understand my child and the way that they communicate'*  
*'Our son has not been able to attend school all week because he is so anxious, but he came here today because talking to you helps'*  
*'I am finally getting to the point where I don't worry about my son hurting himself'*



## Statistics

### 1. Reduction in Anxiety

**99% of pupils displayed a reduction in anxiety. This was measured using the GAD-7 scale before and after engagement.**

### 2. Reduction in Exclusion

**All pupils referred were at high risk of exclusion. 99% maintained their place in education.**

### 3. CAMHS Referral or Support

**100% reduction in CAMHS referrals for therapeutic support.**

### 4. School Attendance

**School attendance has improved for 100% of pupils who have attended Outreach at Muntham House.**

### 5. Attainment

**Outreach therapy improved GCSE performance among 100% of students in this age bracket.**

### 6. Primary Inclusion

**100% of Primary Schools that attended reported better inclusive practice for staff.**

### 7. Primary Resources

**100% of Primary Schools who attended reported a better understanding regarding resources for SEN pupils.**

### 8. Primary Experience

**100% pupils reported an improvement in self-esteem & well-being after attending the outreach day.**

### 9. Secondary Pupils

**40 pupils have received outreach support from Muntham House. These students were the most challenging, with high exclusion risk**

### 10. Parental Support

**100% of parents have reported feeling supported themselves, with improvements to home life.**



# NATIONAL NETWORK

The Therapy Hubs model is transferable which can be adapted to suit any particular school. Obviously, a SEN school with an existing therapy centre would be the best option for successful and simplistic modelling. If two or three such schools could be identified in each Local Education Authority, a high level of coverage would be created to support pupils in mental health crisis across the whole country.

Creating the national network and having other special schools agree to open their doors and offer therapy is the tricky part, however, not impossible. If this request came from the DfE or if schools were offered payment, it would increase the number of schools willing to participate in the Therapy Hubs Project.

Alternatively, with 'inclusion' identified as a new era of the Ofsted inspection framework, this too would make the formation of Hubs or Centres of Excellence attractive and more worthwhile for special schools willing to take on the role of a Therapy Hub. With support from Ofsted, this could be a requirement for 'exceptional' gradings to encourage schools to model therapy hubs.

Muntham House School is part of a national network of special schools supported through NASS (National Association of Non-Maintained and Independent Schools), IQM (Inclusion Quality Mark) and Engage In Their Futures. We have strong partnerships with several strong special schools in the South of England who may well be willing to act as Therapy Hubs. It is not a lot to ask suitable schools to take on however the impact of the project is life-changing and would have a far reaching positive ripple effect.

What is certain, is that it would be far more cost-effective to run the hubs from schools already established rather than building and creating new hubs and therapy centres in the future. Help and support would therefore be necessary from the government and DfE to mirror the Therapy Hubs model across the country and encourage other schools to participate.



# THERAPY AND SUPPORT WE OFFER

## Animal Therapy

Spending time with animals can enhance children's emotional and behavioural control. Although they may struggle to empathise with humans, they can relate to animals. By comprehending the impact of their actions on animals, they can develop empathy for others.



## Canine Therapy

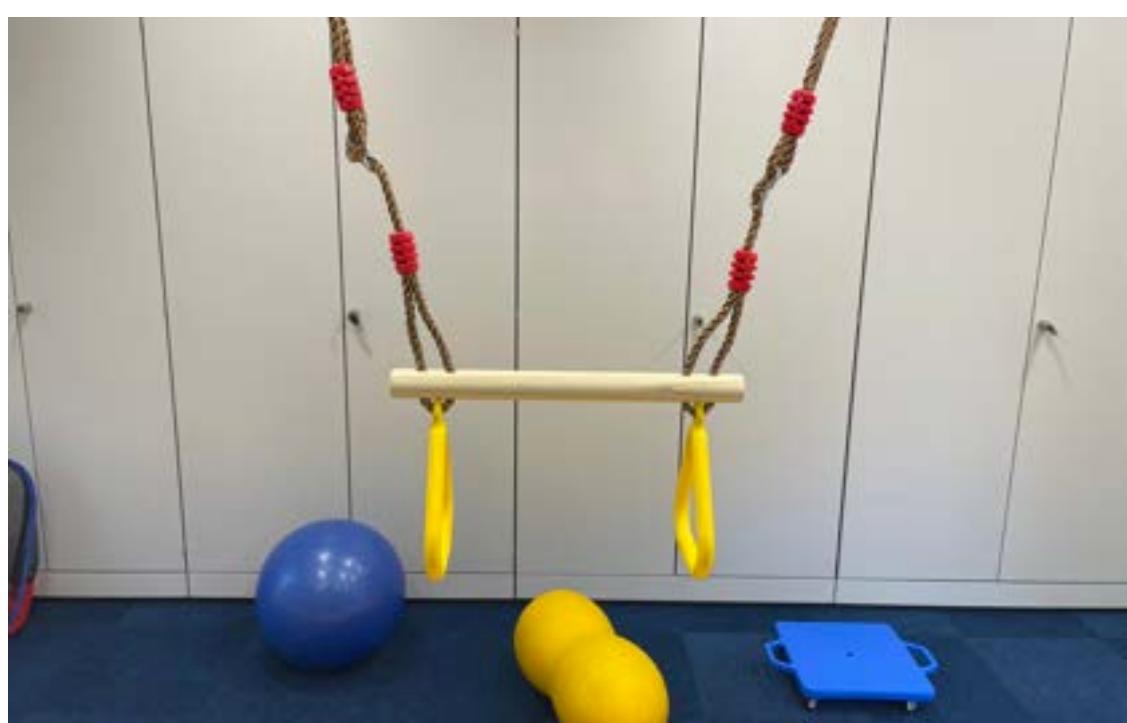
Walking and talking with a dog offers calm emotional support and naturally reduces stress. The gentle rhythm of walking beside a dog encourages relaxed movement and an easy flow to conversation. Their friendly, nonjudgmental presence helps interactions feel more comfortable and natural, boosting social ease. Altogether, this experience builds confidence and creates a reassuring sense of safety.



# THERAPY AND SUPPORT WE OFFER

## Sensory Regulation

Sensory regulation therapy uses play activities to change the way in which the brain reacts to different stimulation - touch, sound, sight and movement. It can positively influence a child's attention, coordination, social participation and behaviour, leading to improvements at home, at school and better engagement in the wider community. Sensory regulation therapy may include gentle movement, sound therapy, aromatherapy, tactile experiences and visualisations.



## Forest School

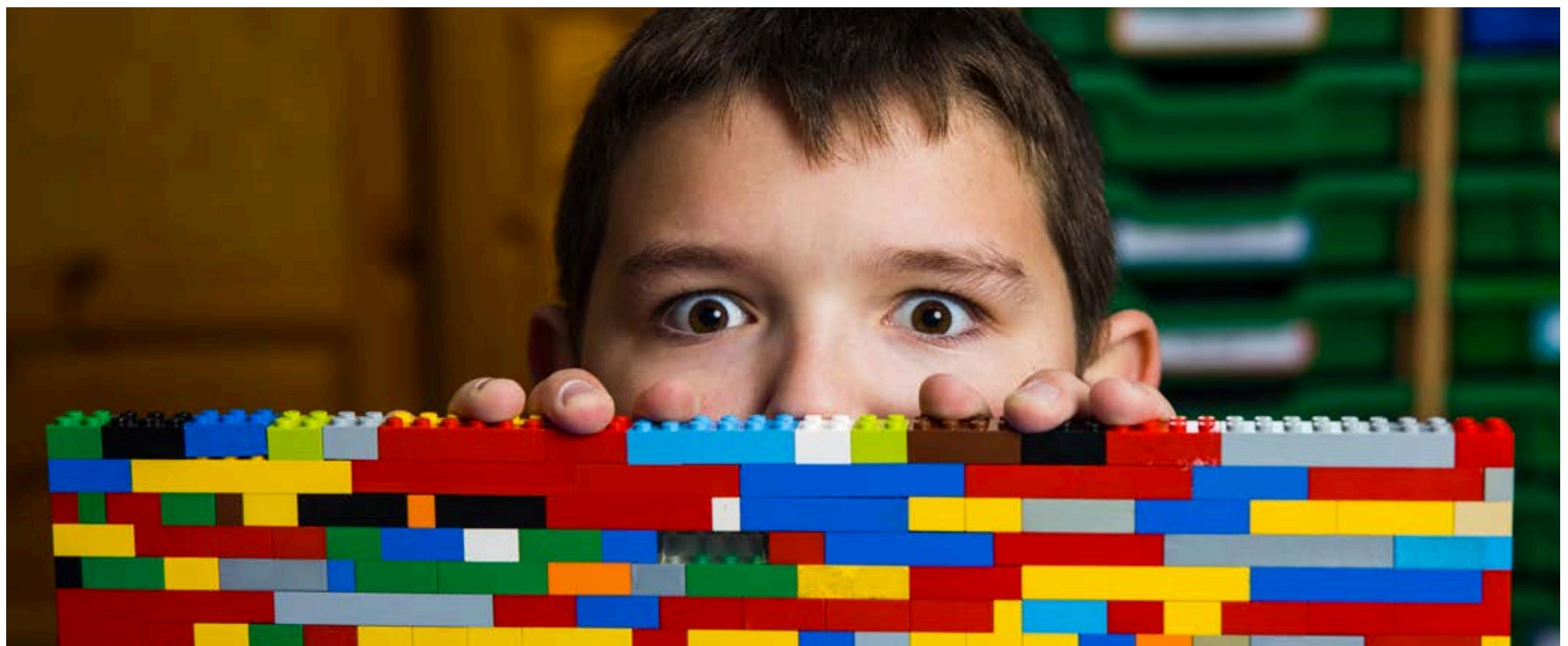
There is evidence that Forest School can benefit children in a range of ways, and that the physical and pedagogical environments may be particularly beneficial for children with social and emotional difficulties, many of whom struggle in the classroom. Forest school offers the opportunity to build self-confidence, self-esteem, and resilience, as well as to take risks in a safe and controlled environment. It also provides a sense of positive wellbeing.



# THERAPY AND SUPPORT WE OFFER

## Lego Therapy

Playing with LEGO in a therapy setting promotes social interaction, turn-taking skills, sharing, collaborative problem-solving and the learning of concepts. It can be used to target goals around social skills, language/communication skills and fine motor skills.



## Play Therapy

Play therapy allows pupils to express thoughts, feelings, and experiences through play rather than through verbal conversation. Because children often lack the words or emotional insight to explain what they are going through, play becomes their language, and toys become their words.



# SAFEGUARDING

If safeguarding concerns are disclosed by visiting pupils to Muntham House School therapists or counsellors, they will be shared with the school Designated Safeguarding Lead. The school DSL, Mr Anderson, will then share this information directly with the DSL from the relevant school.

All pupils must be supervised by either a parent, carer or staff member during their visit. In addition, all adults will need to sign in at the Therapy Centre Reception.

Please see the school Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy on the school website for further information.

Referral forms must be fully completed and approved before any pupil is accepted onto the Therapy Hubs Outreach Programme.



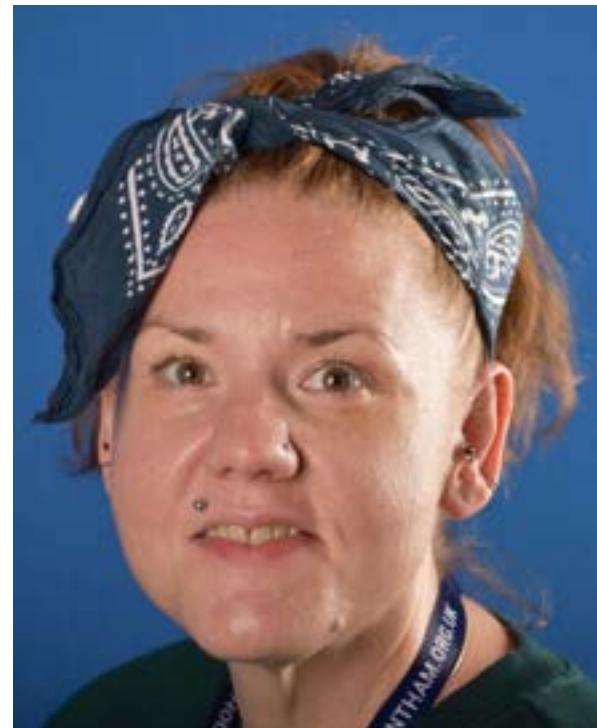
# OUTREACH TEAM



Shona Puttick  
Head of Therapy



Gary Norgate  
Clinical Lead



Freya McDonagh  
Wellbeing Therapist



Maxine Austine  
Drama Therapist



Naomi Moore  
Play & Creative Arts  
Therapist



Louise Etheridge  
Canine Therapist



Jen Sears  
Animal Therapist



George Imbert  
Forest School Teacher

## Applications

To apply for Outreach Therapy, please complete an enquiry and referral form.

Please return the form by email to [outreach@muntham.org.uk](mailto:outreach@muntham.org.uk).

If you require further information, please contact Head of Therapy, Shona Puttick, on 01403 739431 or HeadofTherapy@muntham.org.uk.



# Muntham House School

# Therapy Outreach Enquiry and Referral Form

## SCHOOL DETAILS

# School Name:

## Address:

**Phone:**

Email:

## DETAILS OF CHILD

# VISITING STAFF DETAILS

## SENCO Name:

# Headteacher Name:

## DSL Name:

# Headteacher Name:

## FUNDING BODY

# Name of Funding Body:

*Muntham House School*

## Address:

*Barns Green  
Horsham  
West Sussex*

## Contact:

*Mrs Shona Puttick*

**Postcode:**

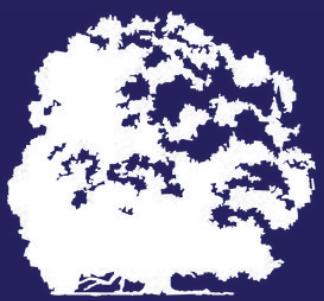
RH13 ON

## Telephone:

01403 739431

Email:

*outreach@muntham.org.uk/HeadofTherapy@muntham.org.uk*



# Muntham House School

**'Muntham House School's Therapy Department should be an example to other schools'**

*Ofsted*



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Website: [www.muntham.org.uk](http://www.muntham.org.uk)



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