

- ✓The sessions with the children are called “Special Time”.
- ✓The Therapeutic Space provides children with a safe, consistent, contained and uninterrupted space where they can explore and work through their emotions with an accepting and available adult.
- ✓If the ‘No Entry - Special Time in Progress’ sign is on the door, the session should only be interrupted for emergencies.
- ✓The resources offered to the child are consistent, which is why the Toolkit needs to be kept safe and items should not be ‘borrowed’ for another purpose.
- ✓Sessions are consistently on the same day and same time to allow them to become part of the child’s school day and to provide stability and regularity to the child’s process.
- ✓Sessions last for 40 minutes and 12 sessions are always offered to start with. We review the sessions with school and home at around session 10 with a view to either ending the sessions or extending them for another block of 6 or 12.
- ✓If the child will be involved in having a special event such as a school trip, assembly, test, medical appointment etc., if you let the therapist know prior to the session, then we might be able to accommodate this and change the time to ensure the child can still access their session and the other event.
- ✓If the child’s session time is not convenient to the class structure or it clashes with the child’s favourite lesson please speak to the Play and Creative Arts Therapist who may be able to reschedule the session to a different time slot or move it when another vacant time becomes available.
- ✓Sessions are not dependent on the child’s behaviour – They do not have to be ‘good’ to attend and are not excluded from attending because they have been ‘bad’. If a child is having a challenging day and this is evidenced in their behaviour, then it is even more important that a child should come for their session.
- ✓Children call the therapists by their first names, which removes some of the formality and shows the child that it is a different relationship from the one they have with school staff. It establishes a more equal relationship where the child will often lead and the therapist will follow.

✓When a child goes to their session it can be helpful to remember that they may well be working through some challenging and painful emotions. This is the child’s equivalent of having a personal therapy session, after all.

Bearing this in mind, it is suggested that comments such as;

“go and have a nice time” “be good” “have fun” or
 “you can take (child’s name) with pleasure”

however well meaning they are intended to be, are avoided.

Maybe saying;

“I will see you when you get back from Special Time”
 would be more supportive to the child.

✓During some sessions, the child may have worked really hard or processed some difficult feelings at a deep and intense level. This may mean that they will need some extra emotional support from the teaching staff when they return to class. It might be worth while to chat to the therapist about a ‘handover’ comment that could communicate this to the teaching staff.

Perhaps a comment like;

“(Child) has worked really hard in their session today”.

✓If the child has had a particularly challenging day or week and it would be useful for the therapist to know this, please do not hesitate to tell us. However, we respectfully ask that the teaching staff do this away from the child’s earshot and do not share this information either in front of the child or the rest of the class. Therapists are always happy to meet with staff for a quick ‘catch-up’ when a convenient time can be arranged.

✓When a child completes their sessions they usually bring their Memory Box back to class with them. Please be respectfully aware that this contains part of the process the child has worked through. It should be kept safe for that child and remain private unless the child chooses to share the contents with other people, whether school staff or peers. Please resist the urge for a ‘sneaky peek’ and ask the child’s permission first.