

Starfish LD

CAMHS

(Learning Disabilities Child and Adolescent
Mental Health Service)

Handbook for Parents and Carers

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Who do we help?

We support children and young people who have a learning disability who are experiencing difficulties managing their emotions, feelings and mental well-being and their families.

We also support other professionals who work with children and young people with a learning disability who are experiencing the problems described above.

What is a Learning Disability?

If someone has a learning disability they will:

- Find it harder to understand new or complicated information or to learn new skills;
- Find it harder to cope by themselves, or to do things for themselves;
- Usually have found things difficult from when they were children or very young.

Some children with a learning disability are more likely to:

- Show behaviours that challenge (such as hitting, shouting);
- Struggle with health difficulties (such as poor sleep, problems with toileting);
- Struggle with their mood (such as becoming anxious or depressed);
- Find it harder to concentrate on what is happening (such as being easily distracted);
- Struggle with communicating and understanding (such as knowing what people are saying or getting their point across to others).

They may have been assessed by a doctor or a psychologist who have found they have an IQ below 70 or more simply out of a class of 100 children of the same age their abilities will be in the bottom 2.

Remember: Children with a learning disability are also still children. Like other children they will have things that they are good at and lots of positive qualities. It is important that we don't forget this.



What can we help with?

We help children and young people with a learning disability:



- who feel sad or upset or unhappy.
- who sometimes get very angry.



- who need to learn how to do things for themselves – such as washing, dressing, going to the toilet and this makes them feel different.



- who sometimes have difficult thoughts that are hard to ignore or that make them feel unhappy or scared.
- to learn how to get on with other people.

We also help other people who look after children and young people with a learning disability – such as family, carers and other professionals.

If we are not able to help then we will put you in touch with other services that can.

Who works in the team?

We have Learning Disability Nurses, a Systemic Family Therapist, Clinical Psychologists, Assistant Psychologists, and Family Support Workers. They can work with young people on their own and will also work with families if they need to.

Learning Disability Nurses

All nurses within the team are trained learning disability nurses and have specialist skills in working with children with a learning disability.

These specialist skills of skills that mean they are able to work with children with learning disabilities who have:

- Emotional and mental health difficulties (such as: anger management; low self-esteem; anxiety; hearing voices and depression).
- Challenging behaviours that young people may present with
- Communication
- Sexual Health and growing up



All nurses in the team are regulated by the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC).

Family Support Workers

Family support workers work with families around modelling positive responses and helping strategies, particularly around helping communication, toileting, sleep, etc. They also support the Nurses, and have additional skills in observing children in a variety of settings

Clinical Psychologists

The Clinical Psychologists have specialist skills in working with:

- Emotional, psychological and mental health difficulties (such as hearing voices; relationship difficulties; depression; anxiety)
- Difficulties to do with thinking and feeling,



The clinical psychologists have specialist skills in trying to find out information (assessment) and being able to understand how and why difficulties occur (formulation).

All clinical psychologists in the team are registered with the Health Professionals Council (HPC) and are also registered with the British Psychological Society (BPS).

Assistant Psychologists

Assistant Psychologists are Psychology Graduates with experience working with young people and their families with a range of difficulties. They receive regular training and supervision from the qualified Clinical Psychologists.

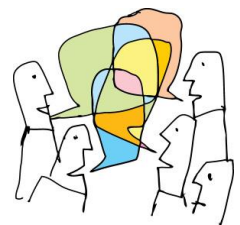
Like the Clinical Psychologists, Assistant Psychologists work with individuals and families, using their psychological knowledge and training. They also support the Clinical Psychologist and will undertake some of the formal assessments.

Systemic Family Therapist

The Family Therapist has specialist systemic training and skills in working with individuals, and families. Family Therapists use their systemic training to help people in close relationships help each other. Most families have difficulties from time to time. This can affect each member of the family in different ways and sometimes affects one person more than others. Family therapy provides a chance for everyone to talk about the difficulties they or the family may be having and build on family strengths to make useful changes.

Appointments can be in your home or in clinic rooms at The Children's Hub, Norwich Community Hospital, Norwich, or Thurlow House, Kings Lynn.

The Family Therapist in the team is registered as an accredited Family and Systemic Psychotherapist with the United Kingdom Council for Psychotherapy (UKCP).



Students and Trainees

We often have students in the team who are training to be psychologists or nurses.

What else do we do?

The team also runs different groups. Sometimes, we may decide that we can support you better through a group.

Learning Disability (LD) Cygnet Parenting Group

We offer LD Cygnet parenting courses to parents who have a child with a learning disability who have also been diagnosed with an Autistic Spectrum Condition. The course is for parents whose children are aged between school entry age and 18.

School Clinics

Starfish LD-CAMHS runs monthly clinics in some Norfolk County Council complex needs schools. Clinics can be accessed by parents or members of staff. They provide the opportunity to discuss issues which arise for particular children. You will need to ask your school if this is available.

Information groups

Starfish LD-CAMHS offers group workshops across the county. These groups may cover communication, challenging behaviour, anxiety, "What is Global Developmental Delay/a learning disability?" or a general problem solving group. The information groups are offered when there is sufficient demand in a local area and is dependant on team member's availability.

What will happen next?

If we can help you

If you feel our service can help you and your child you or another professional can contact our Consultation Line (01603 272290) to discuss your concerns. The senior professional will ask some questions about your child and may be able to give you some advice over the phone. We could also give you some information about other services or useful websites. If it is felt you need some ongoing help and support we can take further details to see whether a referral to our team would be appropriate.

We require formal referrals through our Single point of Referral Panel ([Link to Referral Form](#)). You can make the referral yourself using this form or ask a professional who knows your child to make the referral with you.

If we think we are the right service we will usually offer a home visit and possibly a school observation. We will send you a letter summarising what we have talked about in the initial appointments and our agreed plan of action.

If we can't help you

If we decide that we are not the most appropriate service to offer help then we will try to find another service that can. If you would like we will contact them for you and will tell them what we have learned about your child and your family.



Where will we work with you?

We work with young people and their families wherever is going to be most appropriate. We are a community based service so will be happy to meet with you at home, at school, at another local place (such as your doctors surgery or a health centre). Usually you will be able to tell us where you would prefer to meet for support. However, sometimes we will need to decide where to meet because of the work that we will be doing.

The first appointment with you will usually take place either at home or in a clinic in Norwich. We try to be as flexible as possible with the times that we meet with you and will always try to arrange meeting times that are convenient for you.



If your child does not get on with their case worker, or would like to request a different worker for other reasons then we will certainly consider this request and will help if we can.

When we have finished helping you

Our service will offer support to you and your child when you really need it. While we are helping you, we will review our agreed plan with you from time to time and think about whether you still need support from us or not.

For most families there will be a time when we feel that we no longer need to be supporting you. This might be because the difficulties have improved or even gone completely. It might also be that you and your child feel better able to cope and no longer need our help.

For some young people and their families it can be difficult to make progress because it might not be a good time to try to sort out some difficulties (such as if your child is moving between schools). At these times we may talk with you about stopping the support for a short period of time until the situation is more settled and then trying again.

We will always talk to you about finishing the work first.

Consent

Consent means 'your agreement'. As a service we will want to have your consent, or the consent of your child, for a range of different reasons.

We usually ask for your consent for the following reasons:

- To share information with other services
- To share information with other people supporting you or your child

- To start working with you
- To video or record the work we do with you or your child
- To copy our letters and reports to other people
- To undertake assessments of your child in different settings such as home, school, or in the community.

When we first meet with you we will ask you to sign a consent form to give consent for some or all of the above. You will then be sent a copy of the form you have signed by the administration team.

We may also ask you to sign another consent form so that we can prove to other people that you have given your consent for us to do different types of work with you and your child.

Further information about our Consent policy can be obtained from the Service Operational Policy which is available upon request.

All our records are held electronically so we will ask for your consent to share what we have written with other health professionals who are involved in your child's care, e.g. GPs, and also for us to see what they have written.

Confidentiality

Information about your family and your child will be held confidentially. This means that only certain people will be able to have access to it (such as the professionals helping you). We will not share this information with other professionals or services unless you say that we can. We will let you know who we are sharing your information with and we will agree this with you.

Sometimes, you or your child may tell us information that we have a duty to share with other people or services and have no choice about this (such as if we think that you or your child are at serious risk of harm). We will usually let you know if we are sharing information without your agreement.

The team has a more detailed policy that is available through our website or from a member of staff.

Letters and Reports

We will usually copy our letters and reports to other people or services that are also supporting your family and your child. We will always copy our letters and reports to you, and we may also copy letters and reports to your child if they will be able understand them.



We will try to make sure that all letters and reports are written in a way that is easy to understand. However, if you need help understanding our letters or reports then please ask someone from the team.

Access to Records

We will keep all of the information we have about your child on electronic records. You are allowed to ask to see these records. You will be given a NCH&C NHS Trust leaflet about how your child's records are kept and the sharing of information.

Getting help in an emergency

Our service works Monday to Friday between 9:00am and 5:00pm. Our staff can be contacted during these hours. If the person who usually helps you is not available then someone else from the team may be able to talk with you. Otherwise, someone will phone you back as quickly as possible.

We do also work flexibly and will try our best to offer support that suits your personal needs. However, if you need support in an emergency outside of these times then you need to contact one of the following:

NHS Direct	111
Duty Social Work team	0344 800 8020
Police / Ambulance / Fire service	111 or 999

Making a complaint

If you are not happy with our service we would ask you to discuss this with the person supporting you.

If you still feel unhappy then you should contact the team manager to tell them your concerns.

If you wish to make a complaint against the team or a member of staff then we can help you to do this. A complaints, compliments and comments leaflet will be given to you at your first meeting.

We will respond to any concerns and complaints as quickly as possible.

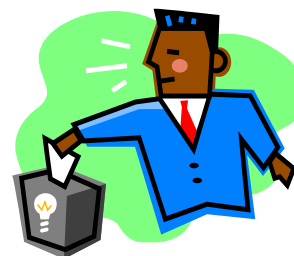
You can also contact the **Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)**.

PALS are a support service for carers and their relatives that is able to offer support with queries or concerns.

PALS can be contacted by email or pals@nchc.nhs.uk by phone on 0800 088 4449

Compliments, Comments and Suggestions

We always want to hear if we have helped and welcome your views on the quality of our service and how we could improve the support that we offer.



If you wish to provide any feedback to our service you may either do so through the person helping you or by contacting the team manager.

Contact details

Consultation Line: 01603 272290

Email: starfishcentral.consultation@nchc.nhs.uk

Clinical Lead: Anne Goodrich

Telephone: 01603 272319

Email: anne.goodrich@nchc.nhs.uk

Main base (King's Lynn):

Telephone: 01553 668514

Email: starfish@nchc.nhs.uk

Starfish LD CAMHS, F34/38 St James Clinic, Extons Road, Kings Lynn, PE30 5NU

Norwich base:

Starfish LD CAMHS, G39 Norwich Community Hospital, Bowthorpe Road, Norwich, NR2 3TU

More details about our service are available upon request from a member of the team.

We can arrange to talk with you about any of the information contained in this handbook and this can be supported by an interpreter.

If you require this handbook in a different format e.g. larger print, please contact the service.

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