

encounter
move, play, connect, thrive

Statement of Purpose

ANDREA RICHARDS



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Who are we?

Name: Encounter
Address: The Encounter Centre
St. Luke's Hall
Raglan Road
Bromley BR2 9NN
Email: info@encounter.uk.com
Web: www.encounter.uk.com
Responsible Individual: Andrea Richards MSc PgDip
Registered Manager: Andrea Richards MSc PgDip

Encounter is an independent occupational therapy practice, currently operating as a sole practitioner. The practice is pioneering in its field and has been established to support recovery and healing in children and their families who have been impacted by trauma, stress, neglect and abuse.

We recognise the need for working with the child and the parents to support and enable them to move forward together to lead full and rewarding lives.

We offer one to one sessions for both assessment and therapy, and work with the family to help them provide the best ongoing support – including notes, exercises at home etc

We also provide opportunities for parents and professionals to come together in forums and provide education and training.

Updates to the Statement of Purpose will be made annually by the manager. A copy of the document is readily available on our website, and can also be provided to all those working with us.



What are our aims?

To apply sensory and motor system approaches to help children and adults recover early missed experiences or opportunities and repair the damage of abuse and trauma inflicted in infancy and childhood.

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To utilise and apply evidence-based and pioneering neurobiological approaches to support the repair of damaged nervous systems, resulting from injury, accident and trauma - particularly in early life but not exclusively.

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To offer a comprehensive sensory, motor and movement assessment and treatment service.

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To provide assessment and treatment services to children who have experienced some form of trauma in their early years.

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To provide tools to address arousal regulation difficulties in children impacted by complex trauma.

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To extend the therapeutic opportunities beyond the sessions by enabling the care givers to replicate some of the movements and activities.

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To increase awareness in both personal and professional settings of the benefits of this work.

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Follow and uphold National minimum standards for Adoption Support Agencies.

What we stand for and believe

We believe every child can flourish and overcome difficulties with the right support, care and loving environment.

The welfare of children is at the heart of our practice and is our highest consideration.

We prioritise creating a welcoming, nurturing and supportive culture throughout our service.

We work hard to ensure that our clinic spaces are comfortable and uplifting environments.

We want to ensure that our services are as inclusive as possible, and that people feel welcome and are able to get the most from our service.

We believe that every child and every family has a right to equal opportunities throughout their life regardless of gender, ethnic origin, disability, culture, religion, language and sexual orientation.



We are continually looking for ways to ensure that the children who come to the service have ways to express their views, wishes and feelings, and know they will be listened to and are considered of paramount importance.

Everyone who comes in contact with our service has a right to the highest standard of professional practice based on the most up to date theory and research.

We focus on working collaboratively with parents, and supporting them too.

We want to avoid a culture of blame and pathologising the parents when a family is struggling.

We follow a holistic approach to child and family development that encompasses all aspects of individual and family functioning.

We recognise behaviour is often an outworking of the nervous system, and we help children and families understand how their systems function so they can develop greater understanding of themselves and how to manage their struggles.

We work collaboratively with other professionals and the family's wider support networks, as we recognise the complexity of the work in this field requires multiple approaches and comprehensive support.

We continually pursue excellence in our field of speciality and recognise the need for ongoing investment to that end, including training and support for staff wellbeing.

We are keen to create an environment in our clinic that both promotes wellbeing and cares for the environment, continually looking at ways to reduce our carbon footprint and increase our recycling.

Qualifications

Andrea Richards, the Manager and Provider, is a HCPC registered Occupational Therapist with over ten years' experience in working with children, adults and families. She has a post-graduate qualification and a master's degree from London South Bank University and is undertaking further specialist post-graduate training with Ulster University.

Andrea specialises in supporting people with complex trauma, and has developed and implemented a number of programmes to support families who have experienced domestic abuse.

A full curriculum vitae forms part of an e-information pack, which can be downloaded from our website. It can also be given to service users prior to starting therapy on request.

Service User Guide

We have prepared a Children's Guide that will be made available at the start of any therapeutic work. It is available to download from our website, or printed copies are available



at the centre and can be posted on request. The Children's Guide also sets out how to make a complaint if necessary.

What to Expect

In order to assess the occupational needs of the child and their family who have been referred to our services, we will gather a full history through an initial interview with parents, where we will request the relevant medical and developmental history from the relevant sources, including the child's social worker where applicable.

Comprehensive sensory and motor assessments will take place over a number of sessions, dependant on the needs of the child and their family.

Full details of the types of assessment used can be provided on request.

Expertise and Techniques Provided

- SMART (Sensory Motor Arousal Regulation Training)
- Movement based Assessments
- Sensory Integration
- Sensorimotor Psychotherapy
- Primitive Reflex Assessment and Intervention

Quality Assurance

QUALITY ASSURANCE and SERVICE EVALUTION

Professional standards for occupational therapy practice are produced by the College of Occupational Therapists (COT 2015a). A booklet or download is available from www.cot.co.uk.

These standards are developed in line with [Health & Care Professions Council \(HCPC\)](http://www.hcpc-uk.org) to support occupational therapists to meet their requirements for registration.

The lead practitioner, Andrea Richards, is a member of the College of Occupational Therapists (COT) and follows their guidance on professional standards. Maintaining the COT standards helps ensure that this practice is:

- Safe and effective
- That we provide a high-quality service
- That we provide value for money
- That we explain and promote the work that we do in the language of occupation
- That we meet the registration requirements of the HCPC.



A copy of the COT standards is available for download at www.cot.co.uk, or a copy can be requested by phone on this number 020 3141 4600. You can also contact them by post at this address: 106-114 Borough High Street, London SE1 1LB.

Our service is monitored and evaluated through the monthly professional supervision of Andrea Richards, to ensure that the agency is effective, and the quality of the service is of an appropriate standard. Supervision is multidisciplinary, in that it takes place with professionals from both occupational therapy and psychotherapy backgrounds, in light of the complex nature of the work.

Our therapeutic interventions are continually evaluated, and appropriate outcome measures are used throughout the duration of the therapy. This is in line with both the COT guidelines (COT 2015) and HCPC requirements for practice (HCPC, 2016).

We operate within the requirements of the following primary and secondary legislation and guidance:

- The Children and Families Act 2014
- The Adoption and Children Act 2002
- The Data Protection Act 1998
- General Data Protection Regulation 25 May 2018
- The Human Rights Act 1998
- The National Adoption Standards 2002
- The National Minimum Standards for Adoption Support Agencies
- The Equalities Act 2010

Service User Feedback

Children are encouraged to tell us about their experience of our service through a simple emoji chart they can access at the beginning and end of sessions.

We also run regular forums where parents have an opportunity to discuss their experiences of our service, so that we can evaluate any changes that need to be made to increase the quality of what we provide.

Client feedback is very important to developing our service, and we are creating electronic systems for users to share thoughts with us, so that we learn from the feedback.

Complaints Procedure

We have a comprehensive complaints procedure policy, which in addition to being available to download from our website, will also be provided to all our users.

In summary, if you are not happy with any element of our service, we hope you will feel able to contact us to discuss your concerns before they become a complaint. We are keen to be made aware of your experiences, and we are always looking at ways to improve what we offer to our service users.



However, if you feel there is good reason to make a complaint, we will respond to you within 4 working days of receiving it. If our response is not to your satisfaction, we will pass the matter on to an independent person who is skilled at managing complaints, with the intention that following their own investigations they will be able to bring things to a satisfactory conclusion.

You will also be given information that will enable you to take your complaint to Ofsted, who are the Registration Authority.

OFSTED

The Registration Authority are OFSTED.

They can be contacted at:

Address	Piccadilly Gate, Store Street, Manchester M1 2WD
Telephone	0300 123 4666
Email	enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

The Office for the Children's Commissioner for England.

You may also find this contact helpful:

Address	Sanctuary Buildings 20 Great Smith Street London. SW1P 3BT
Telephone	020 7783 8330
Email	help.team@childrenscommissioner.gov.uk
Website	www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/

National Youth Advocacy Service

For youths, this may also be helpful:

Telephone	0151 649 8700
Helpline:	0808 808 1001 (Freephone)
Email	info@nyas.net or help@nyas.net
Website	www.nyas.net