

# Policy and Procedures

Lil Peeps is a paediatric mobile Occupational Therapy service, operating in the metropolitan area of Perth, Western Australia. Most services are delivered within a school setting, with a unique focus on significant collaboration with the child, their family and their school. Participation of the child within the school setting and upholding and respecting the differences and abilities of all children are key values of Lil Peeps.

This policy provides information for schools and families regarding the policies that Lil Peeps OT's adhere to when providing a service.

## Registration and work requirements

All therapists providing services have:

- Professional indemnity insurance,
- Public liability insurance
- Workers compensation insurance
- A current WA Working with Children Check
- A national police clearance (not more than 3 months old at time of appointment) OR an NDIS worker screening check
- A current registration with AHPRA (number can be provided on request)
- An ABN
- A Medicare provider number.
- COVID vaccination

**Lil Peeps also uses the services of therapy assistants. All therapy assistants providing services have:**

- Working with children check
- COVID vaccine compliant
- ABN
- National police clearance (not more than 3 months old) OR NDIS worker screening check
- Please note that the therapy assistant is covered under the professional indemnity and public liability insurance of the supervising OT.

## Practice Standards

It is expected that the therapists provide a high-quality service and work in line with the OT Board Code of Conduct and Australian Occupational Therapy Association Code of Ethics. We are guided by evidence-based practice and have a strong focus on functional abilities of the child in their occupational roles.

The therapy assistant will work under supervision of the occupational therapist and this can include face to face meetings, work shadowing, written supervision, phone call or video conferencing. This is in line with OT Australia recommendations and NDIS requirements.

## School procedures

As most therapy (and therapy assistant services) and assessment services will be provided within various school environments it is essential that therapists and therapy assistants are familiar with the protocols and procedures of each school. Therapists are required to:

- familiarise self with relevant school policies they are visiting
- sign in and out at each school

- clarify with school administration if they require a copy of their working with children check, insurance details or national police clearance. This is provided annually by Lil Peeps to all partner schools.
- communicate at the end of the of the session with the classroom teacher
- email communication to family at end of the day with a cc to the classroom teacher
- leave therapy area clean and tidy as it was found
- escort child to and from the classroom
- negotiate the space to work in with school staff and be aware of schools Duty of Care policy
- be aware of key emergency procedures of the school
- always seek permission if any resources of the school are required (e.g. photocopy worksheets, borrow whiteboards etc)
- identify and liaise with key contact of the school (i.e. deputy or learning support co-ordinator) and ask if and when they wish to be informed of a therapists involvement.

## **Communication**

There are minimum expectations for therapists communicating with families and teachers:

- Following intervention sessions, a summary email within 24 hours of the session
- Following an assessment, a written report within 10 working days of the assessment
- Following a session, a brief verbal summary is provided to the teacher (given family has provided verbal consent) and CC of family email is sent to teacher (if family have provided written consent)
- Following a block of 6 group sessions (or number of sessions agreed upon with the family), a summary report to be emailed to families within 1 week of group completing.
- If a client / family member or teacher emails the therapist the therapists should reply within 2 business days, and any new referrals should be forwarded to Berenice Johnston.
- All communication regarding sessions facilitated by a therapy assistant, will be sent to the families and teachers and CC'd to the supervising OT, and sent using the Halaxy platform.

## **Service Model**

Models of service delivery used are dependent on the client wishing to engage the service. Some of the existing service models are:

- School based Screening – compulsory or buy option of generic physical assessment
- Family Based – referral basis by the family GP or other professional for assessment, support and intervention.
- Government funded – referral from a GP for intervention under a Chronic Disease Management Plan, or through self-managed funded (through NDIS) for children with a disability
- Consultation – broad services provided to meet an agency's needs, including student supervision, teacher support, professional learning and evaluation and research. This can be individually with the family, or via a workshop.
- Direct intervention – to remediate a barrier or promote development of a domain to facilitate participation. This can be group based or individual and delivered by the therapist of therapy assistant.

## **Goals**

Goals form a significant aspect of the services offered by Lil Peeps, to ensure the therapy achieves the desired outcomes, and to ensure services are efficient and have an end point. Time frames for these goals may vary but the intention is to ensure that families do not feel the burden of consistent ongoing therapy. The overarching aim is to ensure outcomes are measurable so it can be determined if the goals have been achieved and this then allows the therapist to look for discharge opportunities. Goals will be reflected and reported on in an intervention summary at an interval agreed upon by the occupational therapist and the family.

## **Assessment**

This may represent a one-off interaction with a client, or may be part of the therapeutic process, A range of assessment options are available for occupational therapists to access, including OT screening, Sensory Profiles, Developmental Test of Visual Perception, Movement ABC, Handwriting assessments, Handwriting assessments and School based functional participation reviews. The assessments are administered by an occupational therapist.

## **Student placements**

Lil Peeps has been a Clinical Education Centre for Curtin University. Part of this involved having 12-15 full time students conducting their placement (7 weeks, full time) throughout a calendar year. Berenice Johnston now co supervises final years honours students (OT) and at times the therapist may also be requested to offer a work shadow opportunity for these students.

## **Confidentiality**

All client information (including notes, assessment forms, photos and work samples) are maintained in a confidential manner and stored securely (physically and electronically in a cloud based medical records management system- Halaxy). Information regarding a client is only shared with consent of the family, which is obtained at referral. Families can modify their consent at any stage.

Service records are stored in an electronic format. Relevant assessment documentation are scanned and stored in an electronic client file along with copies of emails and reports. This information is to be retained for a minimum of 15 years after the last contact and disposal of information will be completed securely and confidentially.

## **Appointment of therapist**

All referrals will be received by Berenice Johnston or the administration officer and will then be allocated to a therapist for delivery of the service. This may be allocated based on the school the child attends or on capacity of the therapist to take on the client.

Referrals with all relevant information will be emailed to the therapist and acknowledgement and acceptance of the referral will be required via email within 2 working days. Due to the increasing need for therapy services, it is likely that your child will be placed on a waitlist for a period of time. This waitlist is actively reviewed and we will contact you when we are able to progress your referral. To assist in managing the waitlist, there therapy assistants will be available in some situations.

## **Managing appointments**

Once a therapist commences a service to the client, the therapist is responsible for managing their appointments with the client. They can manage this via phone or email and in collaboration with the family and teachers. We ask that you notify us in advance if there are planned school events that may impact on service delivery or planned family holidays. If you direct intervention is being delivered by a therapy assistant, they will collaborate with the school and the family to negotiate this time for the service to be delivered.

## **Costing**

As a private OT service provider, Lil Peeps charges for services including assessment, intervention, collaboration, resource preparation, communication and reporting. You will be informed of all potential costings when your initial referral is accepted, including the cost for therapy assistant services.

**Cancellation**

On occasion where a client cancels a therapy session, 24 hours notice is required. The therapist or therapy assistant will be informed as soon as possible by the family and our administration team will then be informed. If cancellation occurs with less than 24 hours notice then a cancellation fee will be charged to the family. This fee equates to the session charge and travel where applicable.

Please note if a school has an event planned on a scheduled therapy session, it is still the family responsibility to inform the therapist and cancel the therapy appointment.

If a therapist or therapy assistant has to cancel a session, no charge will be incurred by the family.

**NDIS clients**

Lil Peeps provides services at times to families that may be able to access NDIS funding. In order to provide an adequate service for these children and meet their service requirements an administration fee is charged for every direct intervention session (delivered by either an OT or therapy assistant). This allows for collaboration with the family and the school. A nominal travel fee (equating to 10 mins of therapist time) is also charged to all clients accessing NDIS funding, or those access private OT services in non partner schools.

**Payment**

Clients will be invoiced by Lil Peeps on a fortnightly basis (or on a basis determined by agreement between the family and Lil Peeps OT for Kids). This may be prior to services, or after services are completed. Payment will be via EFT transfer (bank details provided on the invoice) or credit card via the Halaxy payment portal. Payment term is 7 days and receipts will be issued once funds are received. For non-payment of invoices where a reminder notice is issued (via email), a \$25 administration fee will be incurred. If payment is not received after the 2<sup>nd</sup> reminder, services may be suspended or debt recovery services will also be used. Costs associated with debt recovery will be passed onto the client.