



Bethan Beaney

Berkshire Speech and Language Therapy

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Touch Policy

Much of the work carried out by Berkshire Speech and Language Therapy involves pre-school children, or children with learning disabilities who may behave more similar to a younger child. Therapists may work closely with children, supporting them to focus by placing an arm around the child, sitting them on their lap or guiding them hand-over-hand. With young children, they may seek out touch through a hug or by trying to sit near the therapist or on the therapist's lap. We do not resist these attempts as we consider them an important part of communication and building rapport with a client. Touch will mainly be to the back, arms or hands.

Sessions usually involve the presence of parents, carers or other education professionals who will observe the use of touch as an aid to therapy, although occasionally sessions take place 1:1 with just therapist and child. 1:1 sessions are likely to be with school-aged children where adult and child sit on separate seats and with these children, sitting on the lap is no longer considered appropriate. If you are concerned about a therapist supporting your child in this way, please notify the therapist prior to the appointment so that this can be discussed.

Therapists have a DBS check and will only use touch where they consider it to be appropriate to the therapy needs of the child.

No specific government guidance is available regarding the use of touch, therefore this policy is based on Bethan Beaney's experience of working with children over the last 20 years.

September 2023