

Child Therapist

Dominique Hawksley is a child psychotherapist employed by the school. A child may be referred to Dominique for assessment and for subsequent therapeutic work, with the consent of the parents, when he or she is experiencing a problem and might benefit from Dominique's intervention.

Referral to Dominique may only be made by the Head, with Dominique's agreement and with the prior approval of the parents.

Dominique's role is at all times to advocate the needs of the child and, as such, although she works closely with home and school, her position is an independent one.

To ensure that parents are fully engaged in discussion, review and decision-making, the following 'cycle' typically operates:

- Parents initially agree to meet Dominique, in school, usually for a 90-minute session, to provide any relevant background, to raise any questions and to decide whether they wish Dominique to proceed with assessment.
- With parental approval, up to four assessment sessions (of approximately one hour each) will then be arranged, which may be one-to-one sessions with a child and/or may involve assessment in e.g. a classroom setting. The nature of the assessment will be discussed with parents prior to its commencement. It is usual that one, or both, parents are present the first time that Dominique meets a child though not always the case.
- Additional parent meetings may take place during this assessment period to explore the possible impact of current family dynamics.
- Thereafter, Dominique will meet with parents to discuss the findings and to determine whether further sessions should follow. Recommendations may include: individual therapy for the child; parent-child work or parental support all of which can be provided by Dominique in school. In some situations other kinds of support may be considered more appropriate such as: family therapy, individual adult therapy, or parenting courses. If so Dominique will advise parents of where such support can be found.
- Subsequent to such further sessions, a review meeting will take place with parents (and staff, if appropriate) and further sessions may, as necessary, be agreed at this point.

The above process will not be followed in all cases and will be adjusted as appropriate to each child's circumstances. Assessment and treatment sessions will occur at intervals appropriate to the particular case, as determined by Dominique.

Therapy is most effective if fully supported by the family. Parents are welcome to contact Dominique by e-mail with updates and concerns. The regular review meetings will be a time for Dominique to share her views about a child's progress.

All information shared with Dominique is confidential. A child may trust that Dominique will keep their confidence and parents are kindly requested to respect this. A child may, of course, share any/all details of their therapy as they wish. Should any safeguarding concerns arise Dominique will discuss

these with the Head so that school can take any necessary action. Parents will be advised in the first place, if appropriate.

The Head will act as the point of liaison between Dominique and the staff of the school and will be responsible for internal communication within the school. Dominique will provide general feedback to school on a regular basis as well as more specific advice when helpful to do so.

Other than in exceptional circumstances, formal reports will not be written by Dominique, who will focus her time on the assessment and treatment of a child and on face to face communication with parents, as set out above.

All sessions will take place within the school, in a room set aside at Whitfield House for that purpose. Children will, with parental consent, be allowed to be absent from lessons for such sessions, as necessary.

The above outlined provision is subsidised by the school. The charges to parents, invoiced half-termly directly from Dominique, are based on an annually adjusted hourly rate (currently set at £70).

The time given by Dominique to discussion with the Head and to discussion with appropriate staff to gain relevant background information will be at the school's expense.

In cases of financial need, the school may consider further subsidising the above costs, as determined by the Head.

August 2020