

Contact

Bexley CAMHS

Park Crescent, Erith DA8 3EE

Tel: 020 3260 5200 Email: oxl-tr.bexleycamhs@nhs.net

Bromley CAMHS

Stepping Stones House, 38 Masons Hill, Bromley BR2 9JG

Tel: 020 8315 4430 Email: oxl-tr.bromleycamhsadmin@nhs.uk

Greenwich CAMHS

Highpoint House, Memorial Hospital, Shooters Hill SE18 3RZ

Tel: 020 3260 5211 Email: oxl-tr.greenwichcamhsadmin@nhs.net

If you are known to Oxleas, you should contact your team Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm.

If you are unknown to Oxleas or need help urgently Monday to Friday, 5pm to 11pm, or during weekends and bank holidays, 9am to 11pm please contact: **NHS 111, option '2' for mental health.**

we're **kind** we're **fair** we **listen** we **care**



Oxleas

NHS Foundation Trust

MAY 2025 OX355



Care and treatment at CAMHS

A guide to our Specialist Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services

Improving lives

oxleas.nhs.uk



About CAMHS

Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) work with children and young people up to the age of 18 who are experiencing mental health difficulties.

To access this service, you must:

- Be under the age of 18
- Be registered with a GP in Bexley, Bromley or Greenwich
- Have a moderate to severe mental health difficulty
- Have accessed community or school-based interventions in the past

We provide appointments in our clinic base, as well as homes, schools and other community settings.

CAMHS works as part of a wider system of support for children and young people's well-being and mental health in your local area. We may recommend that your needs should be met by other services, instead of or alongside CAMHS, and will support you to access these if needed.



If your referral to Bexley, Bromley and Greenwich Community CAMHS teams has been accepted, they will aim to provide routine and urgent assessments and perform evidence-based interventions dependent on the individual's clinical needs. These interventions include providing advice, signposting information and focused, goal-based support.

Please note that we are not an emergency service.

It is important that your voice is heard in your care and treatment as well as your support networks.

Your assessment at CAMHS

When you first attend CAMHS, you and your parents or carers, and sometimes your siblings, or social worker (if you have one) will meet with a member of the clinical team to discuss your difficulties and hear more about how things are for you at school and at home.

You may meet with more than one clinician and attend more than once. Through these discussions, the practitioner will try to gain an understanding of your difficulties and at the end of your CAMHS assessment, the clinician will discuss your care and treatment with you and agree a way forward.

In deciding your care and treatment plan we will consider the evidence about what might help with your particular needs, alongside your wishes.

We will also seek your written and verbal consent to ensure we share information with those you would like us to, and that we have your consent to provide care and treatment. Your informed consent can change throughout your care with CAMHS and it is important to let us know when this happens.

Depending on your age, your parents or carers may have more input. This is the case if you are under 16, as you may be assessed to be Gillick Competent to make decisions about your care.

Your care and treatment plan

The care and treatment offered to you by CAMHS will be based on evidence from research or from clinical experience. We will also ensure reasonable adjustments are made to your care if required e.g. disabilities, neurodiversity, language differences.

We will discuss the care and treatment options, agree a care plan with you, and give you a copy. Your treatment plan may be altered or changed during the time you are being seen.

We generally send a copy of your care plan to the person who referred you to CAMHS and your GP.

If it is helpful for others to have a copy of your care plan (such as your teacher or social worker), we will discuss this and agree with you who will receive one.

An estimated date of discharge from CAMHS will be set once your care plan is agreed.



How we know if your treatment is working

It is important that we know whether your treatment is helping you to feel better.

Our services have a focus on Goal Based Outcomes. We will ask you and your support network to complete some questions using our outcome measures system, POD. You will be given a unique log in to access this platform and your goals will be reviewed throughout your care to review how you feel your treatment is going.

Some young people may be advised of diagnoses they have when engaging in services however, this is not the case for all young people.

Treatments offered at CAMHS

This section describes the range of treatments that are available at CAMHS.

You will be offered the treatment that has the best evidence for helping with your particular needs. Once treatment has started, we will review progress with you. Treatment will not be offered and may be stopped, when it is unlikely to help you to feel better.

Decisions about your care and treatment are always made in partnership with you and your parents or carers.

Treatment is provided by a range of professionals who are trained to provide care and treatment to children and young people with mental health difficulties.

Within CAMHS, our specialist clinicians are trained to offer a range of evidence-based care to individuals, families and groups. If you are offered a specialist therapy that is not described in more detail in this leaflet, your care coordinator will explain this to you and provide you with more information about the type of treatment and how it can help you.



Care coordination

When you attend CAMHS for treatment you may be allocated a care coordinator. This is someone who will meet with you and whose job it is to make sure that your care and treatment is working. The amount you will meet them will depend on your level of need.

Your care coordinator can help you in a number of ways, including:

- Provide you with a brief treatment plan
- Speak with other professionals and other key people involved in your life who can support you such as, school staff, social worker, carers, paediatricians, helping you with your Educational Health and Care Plan (EHCP).

- Help to prepare you for a psychological treatment
- Provide you with information and choices about the available treatments to meet your needs and agree a care plan with you
- Review your progress at regular intervals

Depending on the type of treatment you receive, your treatment may be provided by a different member of the clinical team, not your care coordinator.

If you have any queries about your care or treatment at CAMHS, you can contact your care coordinator who will help you.

Care Programme Approach

Care Programme Approach (CPA) is an approach that is used in specialist mental health services to assess needs and then plan, implement and evaluate the care that you receive. Your care coordinator will discuss any CPA arrangements with you and your support network to ensure you are involved in this process.



THRIVE

The THRIVE Framework for system change is an integrated, person centred and needs led approach which CAMHS will embed in your care and treatment when delivering mental health services for all children, young people and their families.

It conceptualises need in five categories; Thriving, Getting Advice and Signposting, Getting Help, Getting More Help and Getting Risk Support.

Your care team may make reference to this approach throughout your care plan.

Psychological therapies

Cognitive Behavioural Therapy

Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) is a psychological treatment, a 'talking therapy'. It aims to help you understand how your problems began and what keeps them going. CBT works by helping you to change the way that you think (your thoughts, beliefs and assumptions), with how you feel (your emotions) and what you do (your behaviour).

- What you think
- What you feel
- What you do

Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) has been found to be effective in helping young people with a wide range of problems, including:

- low self-esteem
- depression
- anxiety
- obsessive-compulsive disorder
- eating disorders
- post-traumatic stress disorder
- responses to trauma



Family Therapy

Family Therapy helps people in close relationships to help each other. It assists family members to express and explore difficult thoughts and feelings safely, to appreciate each other's views and needs and make useful changes in their relationships and in their lives. Family therapists do not take sides, blame or provide simple answers. Family therapists help families to think about their strengths and to find their own answers.

There are different forms of Family Therapy:

- Attachment Based Family Therapy
- Functional Family Therapy
- Individual Systemic Therapy
- Narrative Therapy

We may meet with the whole family, part of the family, individuals or your network.

You may see a therapist who works with you on their own or they may be part of a small family therapy team. If they are part of a team, while the therapist is working with you, the team follows the discussion from outside the room using a one-way screen or a video link. At some stage during the meeting, the team will share their ideas with you which families usually find helpful.



Compassion Focussed Therapy

Compassion Focussed Therapy (CFT) addresses some of the harmful effects of shame, self-criticism and other social threats of traumas which undermine your ability to feel safe, to socially trust and experience wellbeing.

The period of transition as young people move from children to adolescents is characterised by lots of changes, including an increased sense of self-identity and an elevated importance of peer relationships. These changes can have an impact on how young people relate to themselves and have been suggested to increase the risk of shame and self-criticism. CFT techniques can be effective in alleviating mental distress and in

helping young people with a wide range of problems, including low self-esteem, depression, anxiety, obsessive-compulsive disorder, eating disorders and post-traumatic stress disorder.



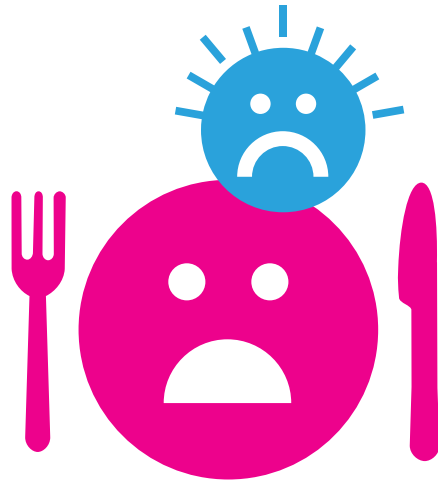
Video Interaction Guidance

Video Interaction Guidance (VIG) is a way of working with families who want to have better communication, a better relationship and better understanding of each other.

Based on what we know are the essential elements in good human relationships, it can help parents and children from birth to age 18, but also other carers, family members and schools.

In VIG, a CAMHS clinician will prepare short video clips of real-life interactions between the parent or carer and child or young person, then meet with them to look at what they are already doing that can be built on and developed. With younger children the meeting is

often just with the parent. VIG can be a powerful tool to help develop or regain closeness which has been lost when relationships are challenging.



Parent-child Psychotherapy

Parent-child Psychotherapy can help when parents are worried that their own past, their relationship with their own parents and their current worries are having an impact on their child and preventing them from being the parent they used to be, or would like to be. The therapy works to build on the good aspects of the relationship between parent and child, encouraging understanding and making sense of the impact that a child's behaviour is having on them and vice-versa.

You will see a Child and Adolescent Psychotherapist initially for 6 sessions. You and the therapist will then review the progress and agree whether further sessions are needed.

Child and Adolescent Psychotherapy

Child and Adolescent Psychotherapy can help you to have a better understanding of yourself, your relationships and your established patterns of behaviour. For some children and young people, feelings can be very powerful and are often shown through behaviour and in problematic relationships.

During the therapeutic sessions, younger children may be encouraged to play, whilst older children might draw or paint and teenagers may be encouraged to talk about their feelings. As part of the treatment, the children and young people are given their own personal box of toys, figures, craft and

stationery to help them express their feelings. Through the relationship with the therapist, you may begin to know and feel able to express your most troubling thoughts and feelings and this can lead to you feeling better. Parents are sometimes offered therapeutic parent sessions with another therapist, running alongside, to help support them while their child is in therapy.

Psychotherapy can help with a range of difficulties including depression, anxiety, obsessive compulsive disorders and post-traumatic stress disorder.

Short-Term Psychoanalytic Psychotherapy

Short-term Psychoanalytic Psychotherapy (STPP) is an evidence-based, time-limited psychoanalytic psychotherapy treatment of 28 weekly sessions for adolescents with serious depression. Parents or carers have seven sessions over this period with another clinician.

STPP is very similar to Child and Adolescent Psychotherapy, but the set time period gives added focus to the treatment in a way that can be beneficial for young people with depression.

Interpersonal Psychotherapy

IPT-A (Interpersonal Psychotherapy) is a brief treatment for young people with depression, which looks at your relationships with the people around you.

It is important to pay attention to our relationships because how we feel often has a lot to do with how we are getting on with other people. Sometimes feeling down is a response to what is going on in our relationships and at other times our relationships become more difficult when we are low and we have lost interest in the people that are close to us.

IPT-A helps you to make sense of the difficulties you are experiencing and to understand how your relationships

with other people contribute to how you feel. By helping you to sort out the main problems you have in your relationships with other people we expect your mood to improve.



Art Therapy

Art Therapy is a form of therapy that uses art as a means to help people to express their thoughts and feelings. The therapist works with you to build up a trusting relationship and will use a variety of art materials to help you communicate. Making art in the presence of the art therapist can help children and young people to get in touch with feelings that might be difficult to express in words.



Eye Movement Desensitisation and Reprocessing

Eye Movement Desensitisation and Reprocessing (EMDR) is an intervention used to support children and young people who have had traumatic experiences. It helps by processing distressing memories so that the emotional impact they have is reduced.

Processing of the event or memory happens by using bilateral stimulation with the guidance of a therapist. Bilateral stimulation involves left/right stimulation such as following the therapist's finger, hand taps, buzzers or drumming. This allows the brain to do what it needs to allow the memory of the original experiences to become less distressing and more adaptive.

Mentalisation Based Therapy

Mentalisation Based Therapy (MBT) is a type of psychotherapy and involves 'thinking about thinking'. MBT helps to make sense of our thoughts, beliefs, wishes and feelings and to link these with our actions and behaviours. Mentalisation can be used in everyday life as it underpins all human relationships. Mentalisation aims to improve a person's ability to 'mentalise' - focussing on what is going on in our minds and the minds of others and to link these to understand problematic behaviours.

Mentalisation can help with depression, trauma, eating disorders, substance misuse and personality disorders.

Under 5s

For children aged under five, CAMHS offers specialist assessment, treatment, and consultation where it has been identified that a child is experiencing emotional, psychological, or behavioural problems that are complex or enduring and/or where there are difficulties in attachment relationships with their parents or carers.



Dialectical Behaviour Therapy for adolescents

Dialectical Behaviour Therapy (DBT) is an intensive evidence-based intervention for young people (aged 13-17) with emotional dysregulation presenting with persistent self-harm and suicidality, and features of an Emerging Bipolar Disorder (BPD) or Emotionally Unstable Personality Disorder (EUPD). The treatment aims to help young people experience a range of emotions without necessarily acting on them, reduce harmful and suicidal behaviours and replace them with more skilful behaviours and ultimately work with the young person to help them create a life they want to continue to live. The treatment comprises weekly

individual DBT therapy sessions, weekly skills group (for the young person and parent or carer), weekly DBT consult for the therapists or team, daily telephone skills coaching for the young person (9am to 5pm) and consultation with the team psychiatrist as necessary. The intervention also includes care coordination and parent, and/or family sessions as needed. The intervention lasts between 6 and 12 months.

The therapy works by helping young people to accept their feelings (mindfulness), to understand them without judgement and to learn to use thinking to change feelings (CBT).

The therapy gives young people the skills and techniques to manage their emotions, tolerate distress and to change behaviours and ways of relating to others in ways that can make their lives better. DBT involves individual therapy and groups skills training where parents or carers and teenagers learn together.



Family Connections

Family Connections is an evidence based 12-week programme for relatives of young people who have problems with Emotion Dysregulation. It's based on Dialectical Behaviour Therapy principles. The course aims to help parents and carers to better understand the experiences and behaviours of their young person, to learn specific skills to minimise the impact on family members, provide peer support from other parents and carers and enable them to feel better able to manage situations and to improve family relationships.

Group treatments

Alongside treatment provided to individuals, couples, parents and carers, siblings and families, CAMHS also provides treatment to groups. There are a range of groups that can be offered including:

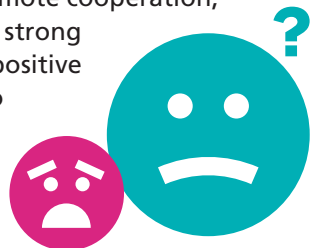
Non-Violent Resistance

Non-Violent Resistance (NVR) is a treatment that trains parents and carers to manage behavioural problems in children which have become entrenched. NVR involves parents or carers meeting with therapists in a group for a series of 12 sessions. The treatment focuses on resisting the child's aggressive and controlling behaviour, de-escalation, facilitating parents to be mentally present for

their children and provides specific techniques which can be learned within the group and applied at home.

Incredible Years Programme

Incredible Years is an evidence based parenting programme that helps parents and carers to gain more cooperation from children aged 5-10 where the child is difficult to manage due to behaviour issues, including defiance, conduct problems and/or ADHD. As well as offering effective tools that promote cooperation, there is also a strong emphasis on positive approaches to discipline.



Other groups offered:

For children and young people

- Anxiety and depression groups and young people's group for emotional regulation
- Groups for looked after and adopted children and young people
- CBT groups for children/adolescents (e.g. Mind and Mood Group)
- Psychotherapy groups for adolescents

For parents or carers

- Groups for foster carers
- Psycho-education groups for children and young people, parents and carers

Consultation to professionals

As part of your treatment at CAMHS, the service also works with professionals who may be involved in supporting you. This can involve consultation to schools, health visitors or social care professionals.

Service user involvement

You can have a voice in developing your care plan directly to your care team, and provide CAMHS with feedback about the care you receive and your experience in the completion of questionnaires every 6 months.

Medication

Medication can play an important part in helping a young person with mental health difficulties to feel better and to recover. Young people will need to go through the initial assessment process before medication and review by a psychiatrist would be considered.



Medication will be prescribed by either a child and adolescent psychiatrist or a nurse prescriber within the CAMHS team.

Before recommending medication, the psychiatrist will meet with the young person and family to make a diagnosis.

Sometimes, physical examination and investigations may be required.

The psychiatrist will explain the reasons for recommending medication, the potential benefits and risks and other treatment alternatives.

Medication will form part of the child or young person's CAMHS care and treatment plan and may be provided as the sole treatment or alongside another treatment such as psychological therapy.

A diagnosis can help young people and their families to understand the young person's difficulties including their symptoms and behaviour. You and your parents or carers will be involved, where possible, in the choice about whether to take medication. While children and young people are on medication, their mental and physical health will be closely monitored.

Young people will need to go through the initial assessment process before medication and review by a psychiatrist would be considered or take place.



Medication may be prescribed for mental health symptoms and disorders, including:

- Anxiety
- Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)
- Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD)
- Depression
- Emotional Dysregulation (difficulty in regulating feelings)
- Eating disorders
- Bipolar Disorder
- Psychosis
- Autism with co-morbid mental health difficulties
- Severe aggression
- Sleep problems

Help in a crisis

A mental health crisis can mean different things to different people.

You may be struggling with difficult thoughts, feelings and emotions.

You may feel like your mental health has been getting worse over time or that something has happened to make you feel this way. You may feel so distressed that you hear voices, have harmed yourself, or want to harm yourself or someone else.

You may have a good idea of what has caused you to feel this way or not at all. It can be overwhelming and you may be finding it difficult to cope.



Whatever is going on for you, we want you to know that **we are here to listen to you.**

If you experience a mental health crisis and need emergency care, CAMHS will meet with you and your parents or carers, usually on the same day. This might take place in A&E or in another suitable place. The CAMHS

clinician will talk with you to gain an understanding of your difficulties and what has triggered the crisis. They will aim to develop a safety plan with you.

This may involve you going home and attending the clinical for a follow up appointment

or being offered intensive support by the Community CAMHS, CAMHS Liaison and Crisis and the CAMHS Brief Intervention Home Treatment teams until your crisis has passed.

However, there are some young people who are admitted to a psychiatric hospital to keep them safe, until they are well enough to return home. In addition, to this leaflet, you will be given the Tri-borough CAMHS Liaison and Crisis Team Parent/Carer and Children and Young People's leaflet and worksheets for more information and support.

Some children and young people may need more intensive community support where an admission to a psychiatric hospital may not be in their best interest or could be avoided if offered a less restrictive option.

The CAMHS professional responsible for your care may seek you and your networks consent to make a referral on your behalf to the Tri-borough CAMHS Brief Intervention Home Treatment Team (CBIHTT) for this support. Their leaflet will also be given to you for more information of what to expect.

The team offer a 2-6 week brief intervention which can include a bio-psychosocial assessment, formulation, risk assessment, safety planning and a range of brief interventions tailored to an individual young person's needs. Any intervention provided takes place alongside your pre-existing care and treatment plan in Specialist Community CAMHS or CAMHS Liaison and Crisis Team.

Useful contacts

Care coordinator:

Psychiatrist:

Therapist:

Any other professionals involved in my care:



Follow us:
[@oxcamhs](#)
[@oxleasNHS](#)



Your opinion matters

We welcome your views on the services we provide. PALS is a free, confidential service which helps patients, families and carers deal with any concerns about our treatment and care.

Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm
(answerphone available)

Email: oxl-tr.pals@nhs.net

Tel: 08009177159 (freephone)