Occupational Therapy Assessment Information Guide

Helping you and your child feel informed, prepared and confident about the next step.

What occupational therapy can help with

Every child experiences daily life differently. Paediatric occupational therapy helps children participate more confidently and independently in the activities that matter to them - at home, at school and in the community.

- Fine and gross motor skills for everyday activities
- Attention, organisation and problem-solving
- Play, social participation and confidence
- Self-care skills such as dressing, feeding and toileting
- Routines and practical strategies that support independence

A child-centred approach

Your child's assessment and therapy are shaped around their strengths, needs and goals. Depending on the information you provide, the therapist may use standardised assessment, clinical observation, or a combination of approaches.

Ayres Sensory Integration (ASI®) may be used where appropriate. This play-based approach helps the therapist understand how a child processes and organises sensory information. Activities may include swinging, climbing, balancing, resistance work and tactile, auditory or visual play.

Your next step: Complete the OT intake form as fully as possible. It helps the therapist plan the right assessment for your child and understand the outcomes that matter to your family.

Before the assessment

The information you share before the appointment helps us make the assessment purposeful and appropriate for your child.

Complete the intake information

Please complete the OT intake form carefully and include relevant developmental history, your child's strengths, the activities they find difficult and the priorities you would like the assessment to explore.

If important new information emerges during the assessment, the therapist may recommend additional testing. We will explain this and any additional cost before proceeding.

Complete the sensory questionnaire

Once the assessment is confirmed, you may receive the Sensory Processing Measure, Second Edition (SPM-2). A school questionnaire may also be sent to your child's teacher. Accurate responses provide useful information about how your child manages sensory experiences across different settings.

Helping your child know what to expect

You can tell your child that they are coming to meet their occupational therapist and take part in activities such as games, drawing, movement, swings, therapy balls or table-top tasks. The therapist will be kind and supportive, and will help whenever needed.

- Reassure your child that the assessment is not painful and there are no injections.
- Let them know that they only need to try their best.
- For an older child, explain that the therapist is helping to understand what feels easy and what may need support.
- Ask us for a social story if this would help your child prepare for the visit.

On the day

A little preparation can help your child settle and take part comfortably.

What to bring

- Comfortable clothing that allows free movement; shorts under a skirt or dress where helpful
- A drink, preferably water
- Snacks or a packed lunch for longer assessments, where advised
- Any glasses, hearing aids or other everyday equipment your child uses

Please make sure your child has eaten before the appointment. Hunger can affect concentration, comfort and assessment performance.

Arrival and settling in

Please arrive around five minutes early. Check in with reception and your therapist will meet you there. The assessment will take place in one of our therapy rooms, which may contain swings, balls, toys and table-top equipment.

Will a parent join?

Parents do not usually join OT assessments, except for children under 2½ years. This helps the therapist observe the child's abilities as independently as possible. You are welcome to wait in reception.

If the environment feels overwhelming, the therapist may invite one parent to join for the first 10-15 minutes. The therapist will guide the session and decide what will best support the assessment.

What happens during the assessment?

For children aged 0-4, the assessment is usually play-based and may take place on the floor using toys, sensory materials and movement equipment. For children aged 5 and over, the therapist may use more structured standardised tasks at a table, on the floor or with larger equipment. Activities are adapted to your child's abilities and developmental level.

After the assessment

Your therapist will bring together the assessment findings, observations and the information shared by your family and school.

Follow-up OT sessions

Children often enjoy OT because play is one of our most important tools. Sessions may include obstacle courses, swings, climbing, crafts, games, drawing, playdough and other purposeful activities chosen to support your child's goals.

Practice-based OT sessions are usually one hour: around 50 minutes working directly with the child, five minutes for parent or carer feedback, and five minutes for notes and preparing the room. School-based sessions are also usually one hour, with time allowed for school feedback, clearing the space and a short parent update.

How long will therapy continue?

Every child is different. We commonly recommend a weekly block of approximately three months (12-14 sessions), followed by a review of progress. The next step may be another therapy block, occasional review sessions, a home programme or discharge.

Questions before your appointment?
Contact our team on 0208 605 2050 or email info@therapy4kids.co.uk. We are happy to help you and your child feel prepared.

Meet our occupational therapists

Your child will usually work with the same occupational therapist throughout their therapy block. If cover is needed, we will discuss this with you and arrange it according to availability.



Antonia



Christa



Victoria



Maaike

Read more about each therapist by selecting their name in the digital version of this guide, or visit therapy4kids.co.uk/team/

We look forward to meeting you

Our team will help you understand what to expect and what happens next. If anything would make the appointment more comfortable or accessible for your child, please tell us before the visit.

Therapy4Kids
189 Worple Road, Raynes Park, London SW20 8RE
0208 605 2050 · info@therapy4kids.co.uk · therapy4kids.co.uk

Document owner: Occupational Therapy Team Lead · Approval: Director · Effective from: September 2026 · Review date: September 2027