

# Trafford CAMHS for Children in Care



**Service Information Booklet  
2026**

# Service Overview

The Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service for Trafford’s Children in Care (CAMHS-CIC) is an assessment, consultation and therapeutic service for children cared for by Trafford Council, their carers and the system(s) supporting them. It is provided by staff from Manchester University NHS Foundation Trust (MFT) and works in partnership with Trafford Council.

## Our Offer



### Getting advice and signposting

- Attendance at case planning meetings and reviews
- Consultation clinics for professionals
- Topic-based training to a range of professionals/trainees

### Getting help

- Formulation sharing
- Brief evidence-informed interventions
- Consultation for unaccompanied asylum-seeking children
- Consultation with children’s homes
- Group interventions for foster carers and residential staff

### Risk support

- Risk assessment and safety plans co-produced between agencies and young people
- Supporting agencies in risk management
- Risk review

### Getting more help

- Trauma-informed CAMHS assessments
- Psychopharmacology
- Individual/dyadic trauma-informed therapy
- Specialist interventions (e.g., NET and EMDR)

# Summary of Services Offered

To meet the aims of the service, we provide the following, broadly categorised into **assessment**, **intervention**, **consultation**, and **training**.

1. Psychological, psychiatric, and psychometric assessment (e.g., mental health screening, cognitive assessments etc.)

2. Direct casework with children and young people and/or foster carers/residential staff

3. Consultation to social workers, foster carers, and children's home staff to offer knowledge and advice with regards to mental health issues

4. Training to foster carers and children's home staff to enhance their understanding of attachment and mental health difficulties (e.g., Managing Self-Harming Behaviour)



# Roles – Meet the team!



Clinical  
Psychologists



Mental Health  
Practitioners

Child and Adolescent



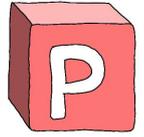
Trauma  
Therapists



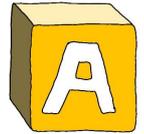
Service  
Administrator

# Clinical Psychologists

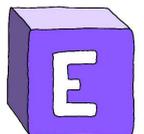
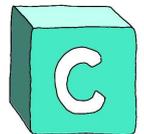
Clinical psychologists are applied psychologists with expertise in the domains of mental health and psychological development.



As clinical psychologists, we bring a psychological understanding of the impact of early adversity and trauma on a child's emotional well-being and developmental functioning.



We also use psychological theory related to attachment, child development, family systems, and mental health to make sense of the behaviour children present with and the difficulties foster families face. In particular, we utilise the principles and theoretical perspectives of the PACE (Playfulness, Acceptance, Curiosity and Empathy) Model.



# Assistant Psychologist

Assistant Psychologists support the team in various ways...

Firstly, they help with various service reports, including the annual report, the Experience of Service report, and training evaluation reports. They also write literature reviews to support current projects.

Secondly, they conduct and summarise several assessments with young people and their parents/carers, including school observations, ASD and ADHD screens, and psychometric tests.

Thirdly, they deliver low-level interventions, e.g. CBT-informed ones for anxiety and write therapeutic stories for young people.

Finally, they help collate information from the team such as the Trafford iSTART project.



## Mental Health Practitioners

Mental health practitioners are professionals from different backgrounds, such as Social Work, Nursing, and Occupational Therapy. They have specialist training in child and adolescent mental health and work hard to engage young people and their carers to help support them with life difficulties.

They offer consultations to Social Workers to consider if a referral to CAMHS CIC is appropriate to meet their mental health needs. They also signpost to other services in the borough.

As a part of the CAMHS CIC team, they offer consultation and support to foster carers and see young people individually to offer assessment or therapeutic support. They have specialist roles, such as working with children who are at-risk of becoming looked-after, and making sure that children who enter the care system have timely access to mental health support if needed.



## Service Administrator

A valuable member of the team who sends appointment letters once arranged with the clinicians and types correspondence to professionals and parents/carers.

They liaise via telephone, letter or email with all service users to clarify any queries or requests. This includes taking telephone and email messages and passing on the relevant information to the correct clinician.

Additionally, they take minutes at meetings when needed and are responsible for all other general office duties.



# Clinical Services Overview

Assessment

Therapy

Case Formulation

Trauma  
Therapy

Consultation

Psychopharmacology

Risk Support

Group Work

# Assessment

Assessments of a cared for young person will have to consider their needs in the context of their current and past experiences and information will need to be gathered from multiple sources, which may include:

- Previous and current family functioning, trauma history, number of moves (from the social worker and their family)
- Any psychological assessments conducted for court
- Report from the caregiver/any previous caregivers
- Observations in the home setting and school
- School report/review of EHCP if relevant
- Information from medical reviews (e.g., initial/review health assessments)
- Contextual information from cared-for children reviews/medicals)
- Individual assessment of child/young person which may also include structured assessment tools (e.g., ADOS/Story Stem assessment)
- Rating scales/questionnaires which look at specific difficulties, such as depression or ADHD



# Therapy

Talking therapies are one way of helping when a young person has mental health difficulties, such as low mood, anxiety or trauma.

After an initial assessment with the service, if it is agreed that therapy is the right plan for that young person (sometimes it might not be!), the clinician will help figure out what type of therapy would be most helpful.

As a team, we can provide therapeutic interventions for young people using a variety of models, including DDP, EMDR, CBT, DBT and more.

Often, our therapy is dyadic, which means that the young person and their carer attend therapy sessions together.



# Case Formulation

Case formulation is a way of developing a shared understanding of the difficulties or problems that the individual is experiencing. It helps us make guesses and hypotheses about why a certain difficulty may have arisen, what triggers it in the present and what keeps it going. Case formulations can be created together with the young person or with their carers and adults supporting the young person. We consider 5 areas and think about how these are linked. These are:

- Past Issues – What has happened to me?
- Triggers – What sets my current issues/difficulties off?
- Current Issues/Difficulties – What is going on for me?
- What keeps my current issues/difficulties stuck?
- Positives – What supports/helps me?



Once we have our formulation, we can start to think about what therapies and strategies might be helpful to try and resolve some of the issues/difficulties.

# Trauma Therapy

Trauma therapists may see young people individually, with their carers, or both in parallel. They offer a range of services from brief to long-term interventions. Treatment offers include:

- Trauma assessment, such as screening for PTSD.
- Trauma consultation: with the carers or network
- Trauma Therapy: for young people with acute and/or complex trauma
- Reclaiming life work – to help re-establish quality of life
- Symptom focused work – e.g. working to reduce symptoms of PTSD
- Memory-based work – e.g. working with difficult memories that have an impact on daily life
- Narrative work – like Life Story Work but used clinically



## Consultation

CAMHS CIC offers consultation to the network around the cared for child/young person. It is an essential part of our service.

We support Social Workers with making a referral to our service and if it is accepted, clinicians consult with the professional network to explore whether direct or indirect work would be helpful for the child.

Often, direct therapeutic work with the child would not be helpful. Consultation can be an indirect way of providing therapeutic support. It is aimed to support the systems around the child to make them feel safer, more secure and, therefore, more able to regulate their emotions.

Consultation can either be offered as a one-off session or as an ongoing piece of work, although all consultations will be goal-led.



## Psychopharmacology

Sometimes consideration of the use of psychotropic medication for young people who present with severe mental illness or neurodevelopmental disorders that are significantly impacting on the young person's life and wellbeing takes place.

Medication is always considered as part of a wider treatment package and multidisciplinary working to ensure the young person can also access therapeutic interventions, social support and the right educational provision.



## Risk Support

Some young people present with a risk of harm to themselves and others. We develop risk management plans together with the young person and their parents/carers to ensure that the young person can keep themselves safe in the community. The young person decides who this plan is shared with (e.g., it can be helpful to share with someone at school or college.)

The plan helps the young person and others recognise triggers and warning signs that risk may increase and suggests coping strategies for the young person. It also provides phone numbers and details of crisis support, as well as pathway details about what to do in an emergency.

We also provide risk support to those involved in the child/young person's life if they are worried about a young person.



## Group Work

We offer the *Foundations to Attachment* group for foster carers. This group aims to provide an introduction to therapeutic caregiving from a dyadic developmental framework (recommended for children who have experienced early relational trauma/abuse).

In addition, we jointly deliver the *supporting behavior change* group to foster carers along with colleagues from Social Care. This group helps foster carers feel confident in managing challenging behavior.



# Referrals

Referrals to *Trafford CAMHS CIC* can be made by:

1. Young people (aged 0 to 18) and parents/carers by using the Trafford CAMHS CIC referral form.
2. Professionals (e.g., Social Worker or GP) can use the same referral (if whoever holds parental responsibility agrees).

Referrals are screened daily and then discussed at the weekly team meeting. The referrer is then offered an initial consultation.

The referral form can be emailed to the team (see below). You can also just come and find us at the Trafford Town Hall if you are based there.



## Trafford CAMHS for Children in Care

Trafford Town Hall  
Talbot Road  
Stretford  
Manchester  
M32 0TH

Tel: 0161 912 3910

Service Lead: [mark.knowles@mft.nhs.uk](mailto:mark.knowles@mft.nhs.uk)

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## Contact Details

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### Assistant Psychologist

TBC

TBC

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### Service Administrator

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