

# INTRODUCTION TO SEN OT

An introduction to Occupational  
Therapy and OT programmes for new  
Senco's & LSA's.

Dorette Vermeulen

SEN OT Team Lead

# TOPICS OF DISCUSSION

- What is Occupational Therapy
- How do SEN OTs provide therapy in schools.
- The role of the LSA/TA
- Using OT programmes
- Questions

# OUR TEAM

**Dorette Vermeulen - SEN OT Team Lead**  
*Dorette.Vermeulen@lbhf.gov.uk*

**Grace McCahon - SEN OT**  
*Grace.mccahon@lbhf.gov.uk*

**Anita Patel - SEN OT**  
*Anita.patel@lbhf.gov.uk*

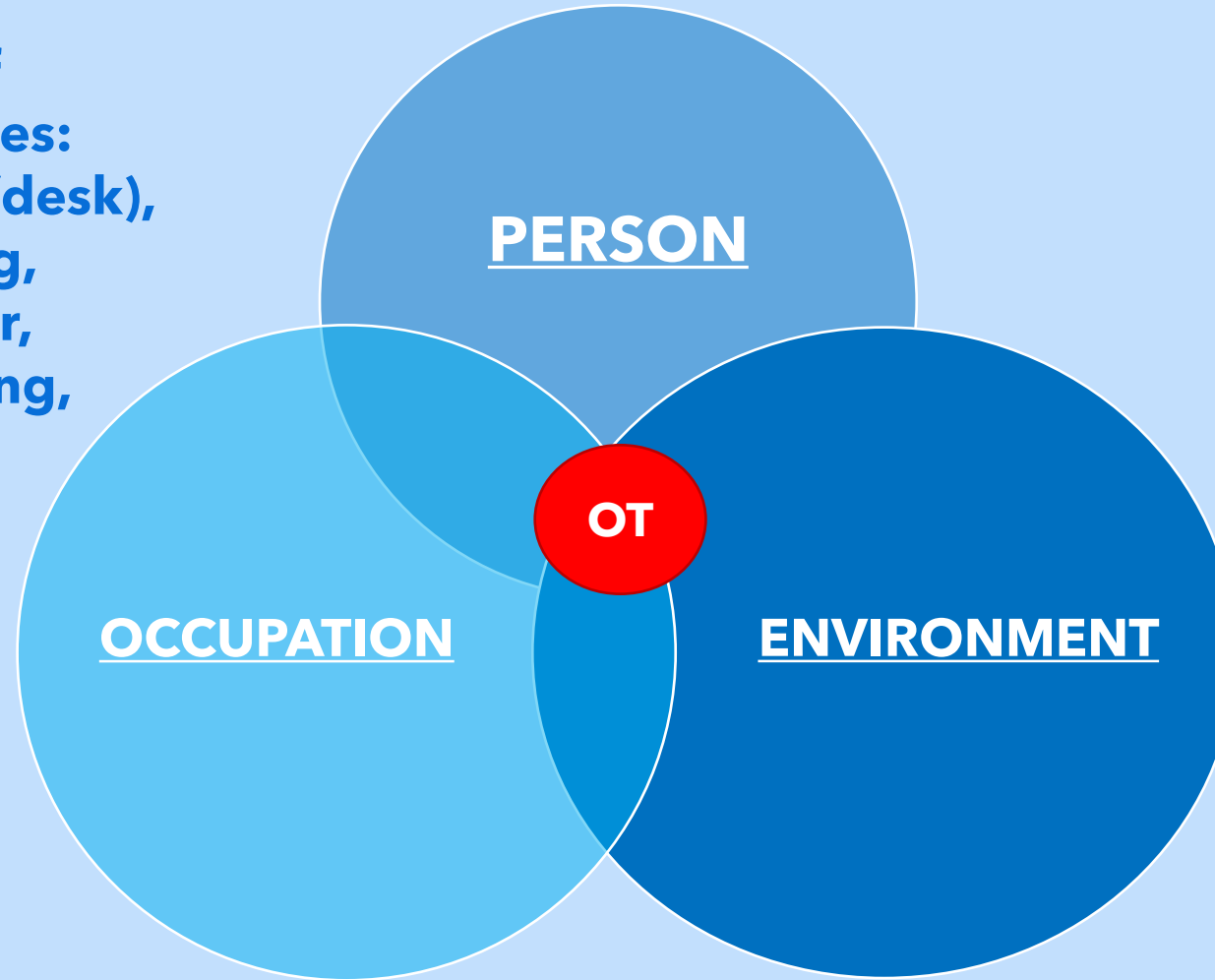


# WHAT IS OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY?

An occupational therapist helps people of all ages overcome challenges completing everyday tasks or activities – what we call 'occupations'.



**Observations of different activities: classroom (mat/desk), writing/listening, fine/gross motor, dressing, toileting, eating.**



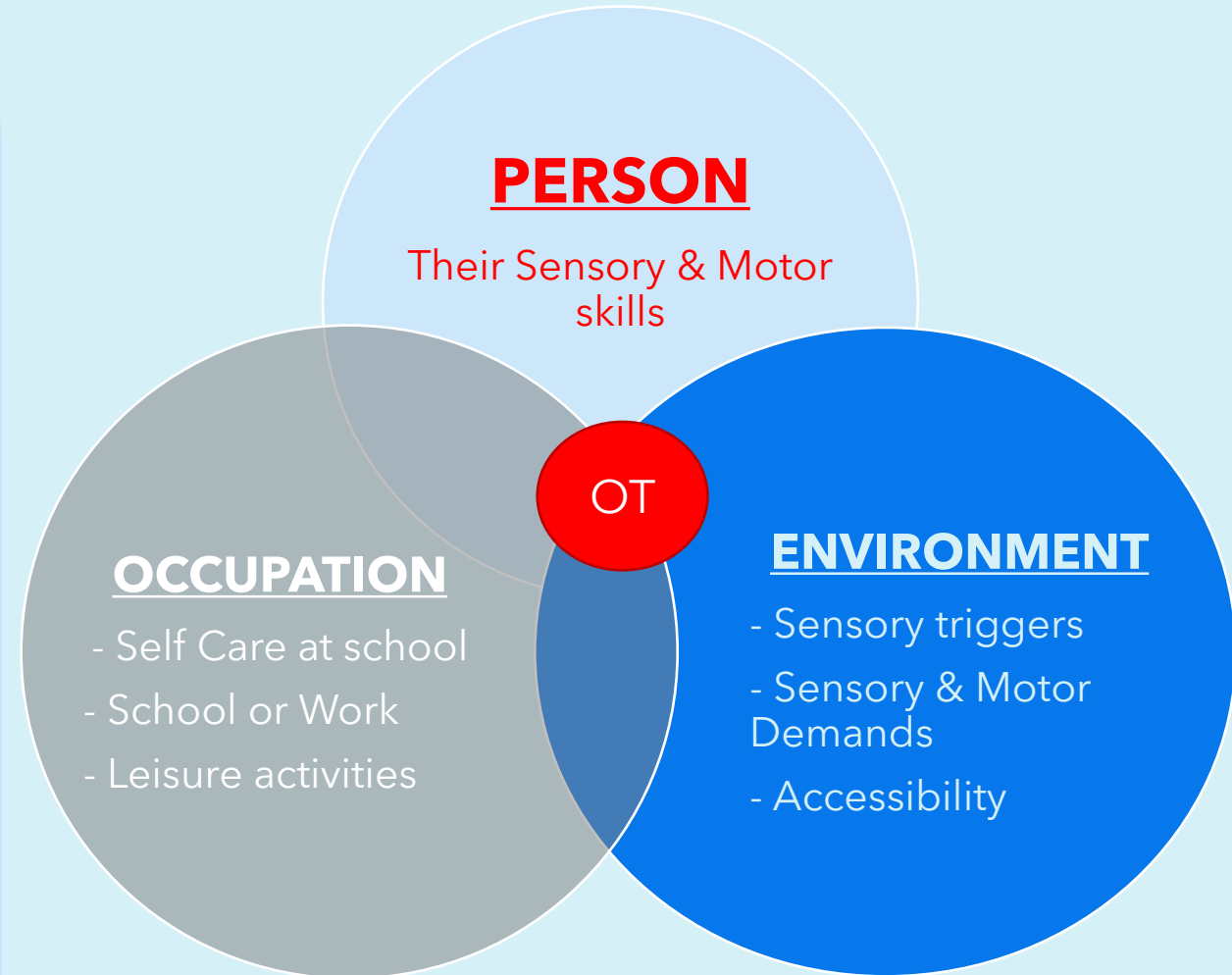
**Observations in classroom, playground, dining hall, toileting, transitions.**

**Settings: Hospitals, clinics, private practices, homes and schools**

# SCHOOL BASED OT

Children and young people learn, play and socialise in school.

Whilst most children find participating in activities such as writing a story, playing in the playground or finding their way around the school manageable, these present challenges for some children and young people.

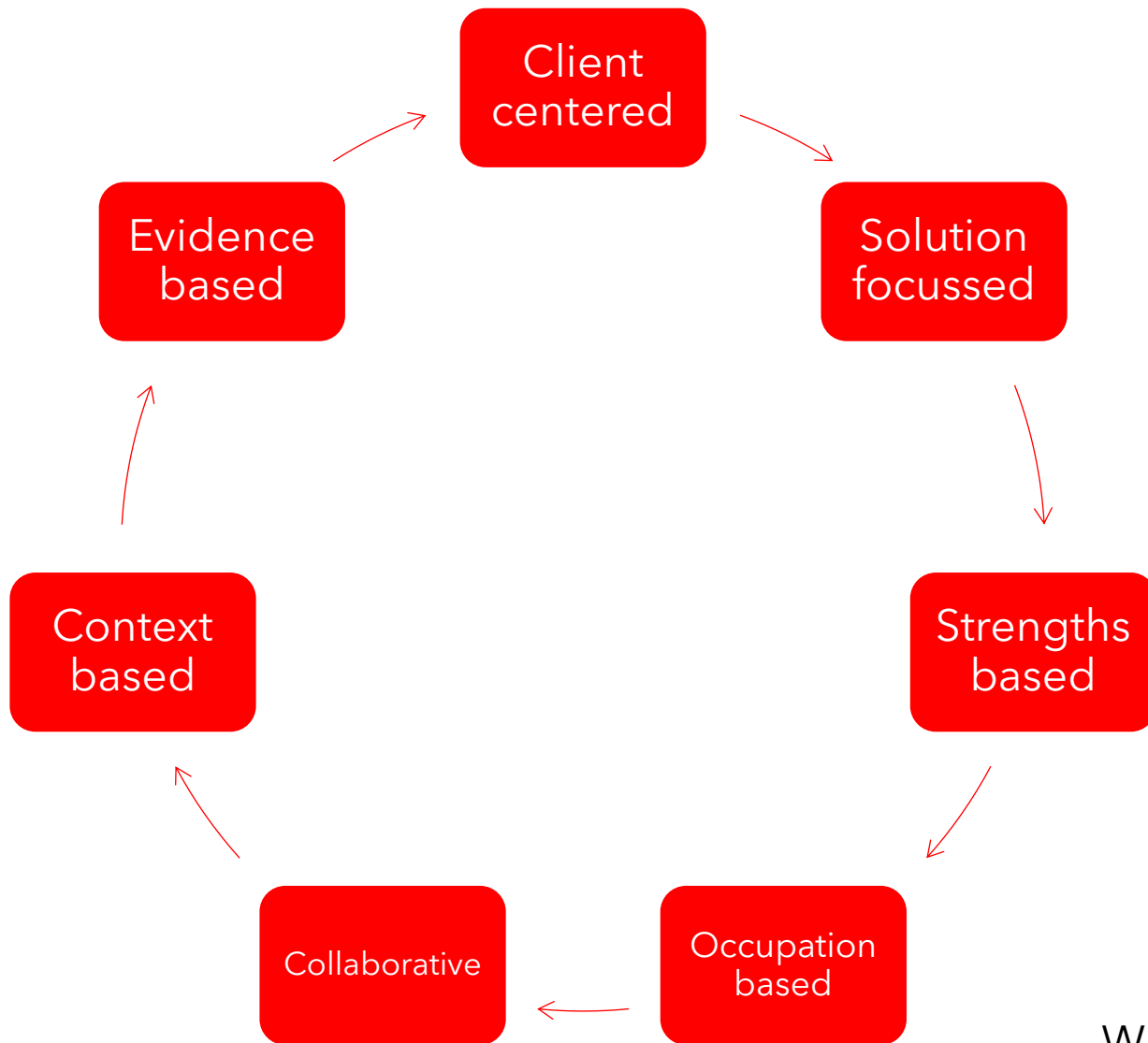


# SCHOOL BASED OT CONT.

## Occupations in the school setting:

- **School work** – including following instructions, working with others, keeping on task, writing, drawing, cutting and pasting, using the computer or playing sport.
- **Independence skills** – for example, putting on and taking off coats or shoes, changing for sport, using the toilet, eating lunch and managing belongings.
- **Break time and play** – such as joining in games, talking with others and making friends, or using break times to recharge for the rest of the day.
- **Transitions** – such as stopping one task and starting another, moving between classes, or changing settings from primary to secondary school, or transitioning to further and higher education or work.

SCHOOL DAY FUNCTIONS	NECESSARY FINE MOTOR SKILLS
Handwriting and pencil grasp	• Open thumb web space
Scissor grasp and cutting paper	• Bilateral coordination
Paper management	• Thumb IP joint flexion
Paper connectors (brads/paper clips)	• Finger isolation
Erasing with a pencil	• Hand and wrist Development
Rotating a pencil within the hand	• Upper extremity stabilization
Coloring	• UE joint mobility
Squeezing glue bottles	• Trunk stability
Managing zippers on backpacks	• Core strength and Posture
Tying shoes	• ROM
Clothing fasteners in the bathroom	• Dexterity
Donning and doffing jackets	• Arch development
Fastening buttons, snaps, & zippers	• Intrinsic muscle strength
Tying shoes	• Bilateral coordination and integration
Opening lunch containers	• Visual-motor control
Holding utensils and scooping food	• Precision handling
Manipulating coins in the lunchroom	• Motoric separation of the two sides of the hands
Typing on a computer keyboard	• Motor control
Toileting (toilet paper)	• Pincer grasp
Toileting (pulling up pants)	• Grip strength
Using a stapler	• Pinch strength
Opening and closing a binder	• Cross Grasp strength
Managing glue sticks	
Art projects	
Packing a backpack	
Endurance in writing	
Removing and replacing marker caps	
Sharpening pencils	
Placing manipulatives and counters	
Opening jars of paint	



WFOT statement on SBOT 2018



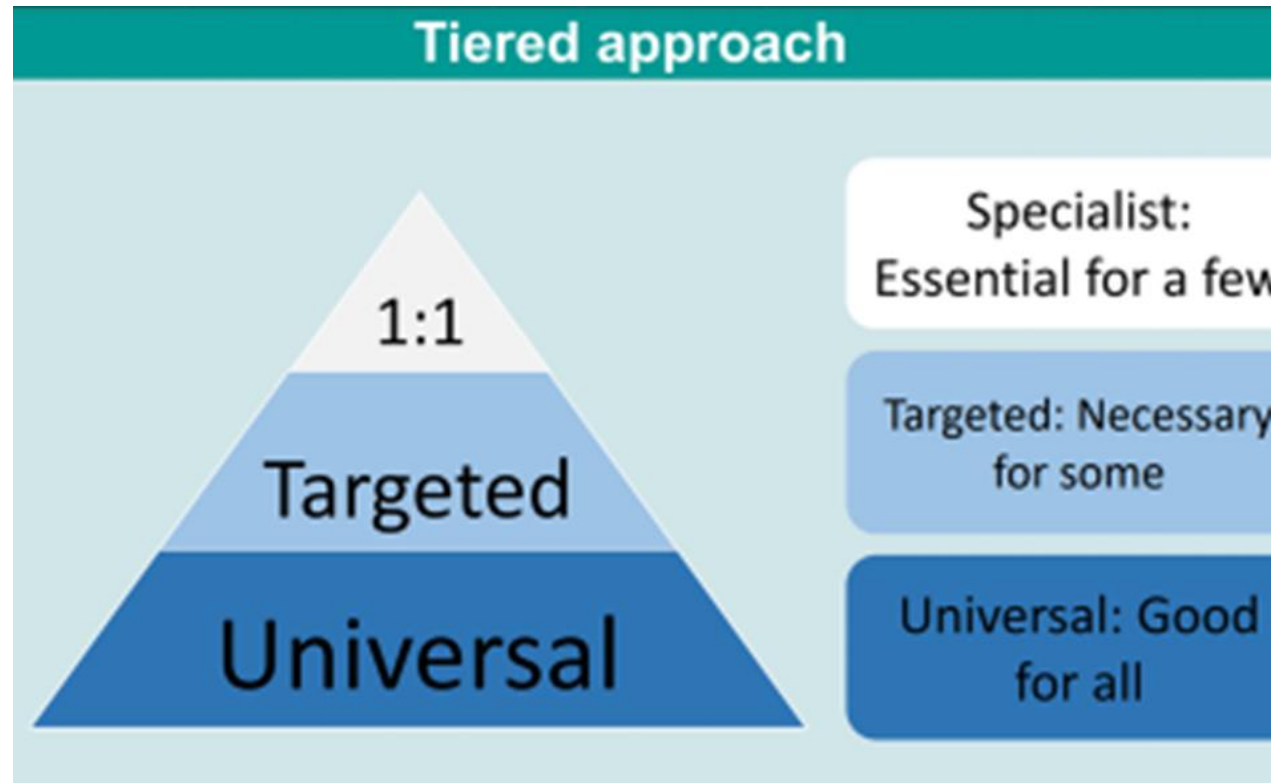
We deliver OT provision for learners who:

- Are attending a **mainstream school**
- Are ages 5 and above
- Have an **EHCP** with **OT specified in Sec F**

### **How to get OT for a child?**

[Occupational therapy services for children and young people | London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham \(lbhf.gov.uk\)](#)

# WHO DO WE SEE?



RCOT Tiered model: [OT in schools - RCOT](#)

---

Role  
of  
LSA

Implement OT  
programme

---

Provide feedback to  
OT

---

Report to Senco if  
you require support

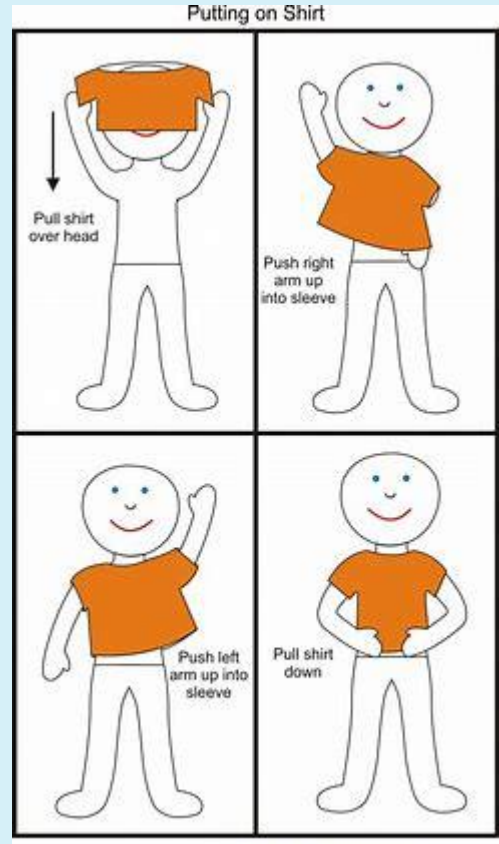
---

**How frequently will we visit  
school?**



# USING OT PROGRAMMES

A programme consists of recommended, therapeutic activities that will help the therapist to meet a goal.



©Your Therapy Source Inc. [www.YourTherapySource.com](http://www.YourTherapySource.com)

### Dressing:

Learning to dress independently is an important life skill. Understanding some strategies can assist to make this process easier:

- Undressing is easier than dressing – expect the student to remove clothing before they can put on these things.
- Loose fitting clothes are easier – try to use lose fitting clothing when practicing dressing.
- Timing is everything - Rushing students will cause frustration and most likely discourage them. It might be important to schedule additional time for dressing prior to or after P.E. or swimming to allow time to practice to meet this target.
- Use simple directions when describing what needs to happen.
- Encourage an understanding of directional vocabulary such as up, down, in, out, back and front. These are important for following directions for dressing.
- Use your own clothing to demonstrate/model on yourself.
- Provide physical help called “hand over hand” assistance to gently guide the child through the steps. Reduce how much you help as they start to learn.



### Backwards is better:

- The strategy known as “backward chaining” helps people achieve a complex task such as dressing in small manageable steps.
- Practice getting your child to learn the last step first. Once they succeed with that step, then start to practice the second last step. For example:
  - Step 1 – Adult puts socks over the toes, heel and ankle, child pulls the socks up the leg.
  - Step 2 – Adult puts the socks over the toes and heel. Child pulls over the ankle and up the leg.
  - Step 3 – Adult puts the socks over the toes. Child pulls over the heel, ankle and leg.
  - Step 4 – Child puts sock on independently.



### Some more tips:

- Lay the item of clothing out on the floor first so the student can see where to put in their arms or legs.
- Shorts and short sleeve tops are easier to start with.
- Use clothing with visual prompts and draw the student’s attention to this when dressing – e.g. a coloured heel on socks, a logo on the school shirt
- Start with trousers with an elastic waistband first – avoid fastenings until the student has mastered the basics.
- Learn to dress the non-dominant or weaker side first.
- Sitting down on a chair or on the floor when dressing can make the task easier.



# TIPS ON IMPLEMENTING THE OT PROGRAMME

- Most recent version of programme.
- When unsure - follow a "little & often approach"
- Make notes
- Use existing opportunities
- Give the child a choice between 2 options
- Get in touch if with us if you have questions.



## **LBHF RESOURCES:**

- [Occupational therapy services for children and young people | London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham \(lbhf.gov.uk\)](https://www.lbhf.gov.uk/occupational-therapy-services-for-children-and-young-people)
- [Home - Inspire \(lbhfinspirehub.com\)](https://www.lbhfinspirehub.com)
- [H&F Ordinarily Available Provision – Information for professionals, parents and carers \(lbhf.gov.uk\)](https://www.lbhf.gov.uk/h-and-f-ordinarily-available-provision)
- [Occupational therapy resources | London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham \(lbhf.gov.uk\)](https://www.lbhf.gov.uk/occupational-therapy-resources)

## **OTHER OT RESOURCES**

- [What is Occupational Therapy? OT Explained - RCOT](https://www.rcot.co.uk/what-is-occupational-therapy)
- [School Based and Clinic Based Occupational Therapy Services \(growinghandsonkids.com\)](https://growinghandsonkids.com)
- [What is Occupational Therapy? Everything You Need to Know \(co-motiontherapy.com\)](https://www.co-motiontherapy.com)
- [School-Based Occupational Therapy \(rcot.co.uk\)](https://www.rcot.co.uk/school-based-occupational-therapy)
- [OT-School-leaflet.pdf \(rcot.co.uk\)](https://www.rcot.co.uk/ot-school-leaflet.pdf)
- School-Based Occupational Therapy, Susan M. Cahill, Susan Bazyk, 2020.
- [What is School-Based OT? - Devon Breithart](https://www.devonbreithart.com)

# Resources

<https://forms.office.com/e/2gvBKJ2qFv>

Introduction to Occupational  
Therapy & OT Programmes



**Contact us at:**

[SENOTservice@lbhf.gov.uk](mailto:SENOTservice@lbhf.gov.uk)

Q&A

Please fill in our post-  
meeting survey

