

Therapeutic Thinking impact report autumn 2024

Demand for training continues as schools new to the programme continue to access the training and bookings for February 2025. There are now 64 of Ealing's 91 maintained schools with at least one Therapeutic Thinking Tutor. This can reach over 35,000 pupils across the borough.

There are now nearly 200 professionals in Ealing (mostly school leaders) who have accessed the full three days of Therapeutic Thinking tutor training. Delegates like and enjoy the sessions. Average feedback on the content and delivery remains at 4.5 / 5. The comments from one senior leader this term captures the feelings of many.

'The training was incredibly informative, applicable to school context and delivered in a way that allowed me to remember and feel confident delivering in my own setting.'

Schools are developing increasingly inclusive practices because of the formal training, engaging with termly network events, collaborating with each other, and accessing support from Ealing's Therapeutic Thinking Lead. Some highlights from this term include:

- A school using Therapeutic Thinking assessment tools to give them insight on a pupil's detrimental behaviour and better target support and intervention.
- A teacher using the Therapeutic Tree to help them get curious about detrimental behaviour in their class and do things differently to provide positive experiences. Behaviour is improving.
- A school providing TAs with 30 mins each week to reflect on pupils' behaviours and consider their feelings. As a result, there is greater empathy and more confidence.
- A school giving teachers weekly guidance in how to work with refugees and other international new arrivals. As a result, there is more consistency.
- A school making Friday's 'Golden Time' a universal provision, rather than withdrawn from some children for detrimental behaviour. As a result, children are happier and there is more valued behaviour.
- A school training all teaching staff and providing a framework with suggested scripts for holding restorative conversations following detrimental behaviour. As a result, relationships are improving.
- A school has removed its public displays of detrimental behaviour (names on the board, pegs etc) and replacing this with private conversations and intervention. As a result, pupils feel less shame, and fewer incidents in the classroom are escalating.
- A school is helping pupils to practise and rehearse valued behaviours with support, in a low-stakes, calm environment so they can better learn what is expected and why. As a result, dangerous behaviour is less frequent and severe, and staff feel more secure in their work.

The roll out of Therapeutic Thinking extends beyond schools. Key children's services teams continue to learn about Therapeutic Thinking and are increasingly applying its principles and using its language in their work with schools.

A recent Ofsted inspection in Ealing noted:

'the introduction of, for example, the therapeutic schools' initiative has had a positive impact on attendance. Attendance levels have improved more quickly in these schools and there has been a reduction in suspensions.'

Several LA teams / services have extended their initial briefings with the borough Lead. The educational psychology service benefitted from a one-day session tailored to their needs, ready to apply in their work with schools. CAMHS practitioners benefitted from a presentation and question and answer session with the Therapeutic Thinking Lead.

An introductory programme for social care colleagues (4 * 30-minute briefings) ran in November 2024 with attendance ranging from 12 to 30 colleagues. We will repeat in January on a different day at a different time.

All Ealing's attendance officers will be Therapeutic Thinking tutors by the end of the year so will have a full understanding of language, assessment tools, and strategies for supporting schools and families.

A parent workshop designed with community representation trialed in Dec 2024 at ESDEG (a community organization for Somali families in Southall). Following positive feedback, we plan to trial this in January and February 2025 in two schools.

A key aim of Therapeutic Thinking in Ealing is to bring about greater inclusion in schools, evidenced for example by a reduction in suspension and exclusion, as well as an end to the disproportionate representation of three ethnic groups within these figures. There has been progress in the last year. Average suspension rate across Ealing high schools in 2023-24 was 5%, down from 5.2% in 2022-23. Although a modest reduction this bucks the trend of the national picture of worsening behaviour and ever-increasing rates of suspension.

8 high schools suspended a greater proportion of their population than the Ealing average. 3 of the 4 schools without a Therapeutic Thinking tutor are in this cohort suggesting that those schools engaging with the programme are becoming more inclusive.

Permanent exclusions in high schools during 2023-24 increased by 2, from 58 to 60. Again, this bucks the trend of what is expected to be significant increases in exclusions nationally. Disproportionate representation of children of Black Caribbean, Black Caribbean and White, and Black Somali heritage has continued.

As a result, there is a renewed and extended focus on the racial inequities in Ealing as part of the roll out of Therapeutic Thinking.

Next training sessions

- Online network meeting Tuesday 21 January 2025, 3.30- 5.30pm [Join us on MS Teams](#)
- [Therapeutic Thinking 3 day tutor training](#), 4 - 6 Feb 2025

Sendline podcast

Watch the [Sendline podcast on Therapeutic Thinking in Ealing schools](#)

Contact:

- **Simon Lynch**, ELP directorate: LynchSi@ealing.gov.uk 07581 064226

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