



Ellie Marchant

● Play therapy

Play therapy for children aged four to eleven, and plain help for the adults who bring them.



The practice, written down: what it is, who it is for, what it values and how it should sound. The identity and everything made with it are built from these pages, so each design decision has a reason you can read here.

Sample practice. Ellie Marchant is not a real person; every fact here is illustrative and marked, so the format and the range of the system can be judged. Nothing in this document is a claim about any practitioner.

Prepared by Alexander Watson Studio · Professional Practice Identity
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How to read this

Your facts, and my reading of them.

Two kinds of sentence appear in this document. Some are **facts you gave me**: your fee, your days, who you work with, the words you used in discovery. Others are **my interpretation**: what I think the practice is really offering, and what follows from that for how it should look and sound.

Please read it with a pen. Correct any fact that is wrong. Where an interpretation does not sound like you, say so; that is the most useful feedback there is, and it is the whole point of showing you this before anything is designed.

What this document does not do: it does not advise on your fees, your specialism or how to find clients, and it does not describe who you will be in ten years. It describes the practice you have now, in a form built to be updated.

The practice, at three lengths

The same practice, described for the places it appears. These are drafts for you to correct, in your words rather than mine wherever you had them.

One line · directory headline, Instagram bio

Play therapy for children aged four to eleven, in Leeds.

Three lines · directory opening, email footer

Play therapy for children aged four to eleven, in Leeds. Weekly forty-five-minute sessions in a room set up for playing, and regular, plain conversations with parents about how it is going.

A paragraph · website, long-form profiles

I am a play therapist working with children aged four to eleven in Leeds. Children often cannot say what is wrong, but they can show it, and playing is how they do that. Sessions are weekly, forty-five minutes, at the same time each week, in a room set up for exactly this. Parents are part of the work: we meet before your child does, and every few weeks after that, so you know what is happening and what you can do at home.

Positioning

A play therapist who takes children seriously and talks to parents like adults.



What this is

One-to-one play therapy for children aged four to eleven, weekly, in person in Leeds, with an initial meeting and regular reviews with parents or carers. Usually twelve to twenty-four sessions, reviewed together.

What this is not

Not family therapy, not assessment or diagnosis, not a service for teenagers, and not something that happens without the parents knowing what is going on.

What is distinctive

Most play therapy websites speak to the child, with primary colours and cartoon animals, and leave the parent, who is the one reading at eleven at night after a hard bedtime, with nothing to hold. This practice speaks to the parent first: what happens, how long it takes, what it costs, what you will be told and when. The child's experience is warm and unhurried; the parent's experience is clear and organised. The identity carries both.

Why positioning comes before design

A wordmark cannot decide who the practice is for or what it should not claim. Those decisions are made here, and the identity carries them. If the practice changes, this page is edited first and the identity follows; the typeface does not need to change because a specialism did.

People

Who this is for, and just as usefully, who it is not.

Who it is for

Children aged four to eleven whose behaviour or mood has changed and who cannot say why

Children going through a separation, a bereavement, a move or a new sibling

Children who are anxious, withdrawn or explosive at home but 'fine at school', or the reverse

Parents and carers who want to understand what is happening, not just hand the child over

Who it is not for

Children under four or over eleven, who are referred to colleagues

Families needing an assessment, a diagnosis or a report for court or school

Situations needing urgent safeguarding or crisis support, which are signposted clearly

Saying this plainly is a kindness to the people it does not suit, and it is what lets the identity be specific rather than general.

What people say when they first get in touch

“School say she's fine. She is not fine at home.”

“He won't talk to us about it, and I don't want to make it worse.”

“Is this just a phase, or should we be doing something?”

These sentences decide what the first screen, the first line of a profile and the enquiry route have to do. They are the reader the identity is designed for.

Character

The part that stays the same when the practice changes.

Values, and what each one means in practice

Clarity for parents

Every stage, fee and boundary is explained before it happens, in writing, in ordinary words.

The child leads

In the room the child chooses what to play. The therapist follows, notices and keeps it safe. That is the method, not a slogan.

No drama

Behaviour is information, not a verdict. Nobody is labelled, and nothing is catastrophised.

Organised warmth

Same room, same time, same toys. Children feel safe in things that stay put, and so do their parents.

Personality

Energetic and warm, with a schedule

Direct with adults, gentle with children, and never the other way round

Funny in a quiet way; unshockable

Practical: there is always a next step, even if the next step is wait

How someone should feel, reading the page

A parent reading the page should feel their shoulders drop a little: this person knows what she is doing, will tell me what is going on, and my child will be safe with her.

What is fixed and what is allowed to move

The character, the values and the way parents should feel are the fixed part. The age range, the fee, the room, the number of sessions and the training behind the work are allowed to change, and the identity is built so that they can without the kite or the name changing.

Voice

Warm, direct, organised. Short sentences. Facts first, then reassurance, never reassurance instead of facts.

Habits of the writing

Address the parent as “you” and the child as “your child”, by name once you know it. Never “the child” or “clients”.

Say what happens, in order: first we meet, then your child comes weekly, then we review together.

Describe behaviour, not diagnoses: “shouting at bedtime”, not “dysregulation”.

One idea per sentence, one question answered per paragraph.

Use plain numbers: forty-five minutes, every Tuesday, twelve sessions then a review.

Sounds like this

Children can't always say what's wrong. Playing is how they show it.

We meet first, without your child, so you can ask everything you want to ask.

Twelve sessions, then we sit down together and decide what next.

Words and moves to avoid

“Journey”, “holistic”, “nurturing little souls”, “magic of play”

Clinical jargon aimed at parents, and baby-talk aimed at anyone

Promising that behaviour will change, or that school will notice

Exclamation marks, emoji, and rhetorical questions

Does not sound like this

~~Unlock your child's potential through the magic of play!~~

~~A nurturing, child-centred space where little hearts can heal.~~

Not because these sentences are wrong for everyone. They are wrong for this practice, whose readers have heard them and stopped believing them.

Messages

Four things the identity has to say, wherever it appears.

01 Children show what they can't say

Play is the child's language and the room is set up for it. That is the whole of the method, said plainly.

02 You will know what is happening

An initial meeting with parents, written notes of what to expect, and a review every few weeks. Nothing happens behind a closed door you cannot see into.

03 The practical answers, first

Fee, session length, days, where, and how many sessions before a review, on the first screen and the first line of every profile.

04 Same time, same room, same toys

Consistency is part of the treatment. It is also what lets a parent plan the week.

Still needed from you

Registration body and level, exactly as the body permits it to be stated, and the safeguarding and DBS wording the body expects

Fee, session length, days and times, term-time arrangements, address

Confirmation of the age range and the usual number of sessions before a review

A photograph of the practitioner, and a photograph of the room if one is wanted

Any phrases from the discovery answers to keep word for word

Approving this document

When the facts are right and the interpretation sounds like you, reply with one line to say so, or send one consolidated set of corrections. The identity and the applications are built from the approved version, and nothing is issued until it is approved.

Corrections to facts, or to anything that departs from what you told me, are never counted as a review round.

Approved by

Date