

Keeping safe at the Croft

Key workers explain the fire and safety rules when families arrive. We expect families to help keep everyone safe and that is why we ask parents not to bring alcohol or drugs into the Croft. To help avoid accidents please give the nurses any medicines which will be stored in a safe place.

What about meals?

We ask each family to tell us what foods they like and dislike and if they or their child have any food allergies. We provide a good range of basic food stuff. Families can bring some special items from home and we will provide space for storage. The fully equipped kitchen is available for families to prepare their meals.

Other household facilities

We have a washing machine, tumble dryer, television, DVD and children's toys that can be used. We also provide towels and bedding, and parents make the beds and change the sheets every week.

What to bring

Toothbrushes, toothpaste, flannels, personal toiletries, clothes and nappies (if applicable). We suggest that families bring only a small amount of money. Please do not bring any valuables or large amounts of money because we cannot accept responsibility if they are lost or damaged. Also no electronic/computer games as there is a wide range of toys and activities for the children to try out while at the Croft.

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The Croft Child and Family Service

Welcome to The Croft

This leaflet has been produced to introduce you to the Croft, explain what we do and how we want to work with you. We want to ensure you are fully informed and involved in the care your family receives at the Croft. We know that this may be a stressful and anxious time for you and your family and you will probably have a lot of questions. We cannot answer them all in this leaflet so please do not hesitate to raise any questions with us and we will try and help.

What is the Croft?

The Croft is a specialist centre for families with children 12 years of age and under, who have mental health concerns or other medical conditions that affect children's social and emotional development and behaviour. Sometimes other members of the family also have mental health problems and need support for these.

Who will you meet at the Croft?

The team is made up of doctors, nurses, therapists, a clinical psychologist and teachers. They have all been specifically trained to work with families. They work in a multidisciplinary way. This means that they work together to understand the needs of your family and then prepare a plan with you to meet your specific needs.

The First Step—assessment

Most families are referred to us by their Community Child Mental Health team. Based on the information they give us you will be given an appointment to meet one of our senior team members to talk about the problems you are having, to find out about the Croft and have a look around. We may also ask you to complete some questionnaires to help us decide what options are available to you and if it is appropriate for you and your child to come to the Croft. If we agree that an admission would be helpful we will invite you to come and visit the unit again as part of preparing for coming here.





Working together

On average patients stay at the Croft Monday to Friday for about 8 weeks, although some stays can be shorter or longer. You and members of the team will review progress weekly and agree changes to your care plan. During your time with us we will keep in contact with other people who are involved in supporting your family e.g. your GP, child and family nurse, social workers and teachers. This is done so that they can support you when you leave the Croft. A full review meeting involving staff, parents, children and all caring professionals involved with the child is held every 6 weeks. This is called a CPA (care Programme Approach) review meeting

We will work with you to understand the emotional or behavioural problems your child is experiencing and help you find new ways to cope with the impact this is having on the whole family. We will listen carefully to what you tell us and respect what you say. We will set goals together and agree the action that we are going to take to achieve them. We will record this and prepare a document called a Care Plan which sets out the key goals and how we aim to work on/achieve these.

To make the most of what the Croft has to offer you should try to fully participate in the programme we offer and be prepared to try out new ways of behaving and relating to other members of the family.

We offer a variety of treatments including family therapy, group work, one-to-one sessions, music therapy, behavioural management and medication. We will discuss with you what is appropriate for your child.

When you arrive you will meet your key worker and your support worker. Their first task is to show you around and help you settle in. On a day to day basis they will support you achieve the goals in your care plan, help you to evaluate your progress and give you feedback to help you move forward.

A residential stay may be appropriate when a child lives a long way from the unit or if we need to observe a child on a 24 hour basis to gain more information about his/her condition and its impact on their family. Families who are admitted for a parenting assessment would normally be residential.

Most children stay on the unit residentially with an accompanying parent/carer. The unit is open Monday to Friday. Some older children may have a period of time on unit on their own if this is appropriate. Some children may attend as day patients for all or part of their admission.



Our daily routine

At the Croft we have day patients and residential patients but our daily routine from Monday to Friday is the same for all. The daily programme of education, individual and group sessions starts at 9:00am continues until 3:30pm except for Fridays when the children have school from 9 to 10:45am, after which all families go home. We break for lunch around 12:30pm from Monday to Thursday. Children attend the school in the morning and therapeutic sessions in the afternoon. At the end of the day we meet together to review how the day has gone.

Parents also have group therapy sessions during the day to discuss parenting issues.

What about school?

We have a small school with one teacher and two learning support assistants. Children attend every Monday to Friday morning. The high adult to child ratio helps us to provide children with more individual support not only with their schoolwork, but also with their behaviour. Every child has their own programme specific to their needs but will be involved in as many group activities as possible. We also maintain close links with the child's own school to provide continuity and advice to the teacher in the future. Sometimes children continue to attend their own school one day a week during their stay at the Croft.

Staying at the Croft

Families staying residentially have the same intensive programme as day patients but also have support at potentially difficult times of day, such as bedtime, mealtimes and getting up in the morning. As far as possible we want families to continue with their usual routine including going to work if this is possible. Families live communally at the Croft sharing living rooms, kitchen and bathroom space, Families are generally very supportive of each other but we have a broad mix of people staying at the Croft and we expect families to be flexible and tolerant to people who may behave differently to themselves. We have regular meetings to sort out any issues that might arise.

In the evening parents are responsible for the care of their children staff are available to support them when needed.