Children with psychotic symptoms may present to community CAMHS with diverse clinical pictures difficult to adequately assess and manage. They can present on the background of neurodevelopmental disorders including autism spectrum disorders and learning disability, with comorbid mood or severe anxiety disorders, with serious risk behaviours, or in the context of safeguarding concerns. These children are likely not to have their needs met in the community, frequently requiring hospital admission.

In this session, I will discuss the Acorn Lodge experience in working with these children and their families both diagnostically and therapeutically also using specific case examples. The participants will be encouraged to contribute to the thinking about psychosis in childhood and share their own clinical approaches. The aim of the session is to stimulate discussion around the challenges arising from working with childhood psychosis, facilitate a better understanding of these disorders and exchange views on best clinical practice.

Learning goals
At the end of the session participants will:

a) Have increased awareness of how different dimensions of psychopathology and aberrant neurodevelopment contribute to the clinical presentation of children with psychotic symptoms.

b) Have acquired a more systematic approach to assessment and management of children with psychotic symptoms.

c) Have increased understanding of treatment approaches for childhood psychosis.