

# **Service Specific Questions West Sussex Educational Psychology Service:**

## **1. What does your service do?**

The Educational Psychology Service (EPS) promotes the development and learning of all children through the application of psychology. Educational Psychologists work at the level of the educational organisation, with individuals and groups of children, teachers and other adults in schools, families, other local authority officers, health, social and care and other agencies. Educational Psychologists have competencies in consultation, assessment, case formulation, and intervention related to children's learning, developmental, behavioural, emotional and mental health needs. The EPS also includes Portage, a home teaching service for children with complex needs identified before they move into an educational setting and delivers Earlybird, a National Autistic Society accredited training programme for "parents whose child has received a diagnosis of an autism spectrum disorder (ASD) and is of pre-school age (not yet of statutory school age)." (NAS)

## **2. Where is it located and what areas does it cover?**

The Educational Psychology Service is organised in four Area teams,

- ☐ Area West (the western part of the county including Bognor, Selsey, Chichester, Midhurst, the Rother Valley and Petworth),
- ☐ Area South (the southern coastal strip extending from Shoreham and Lancing and up to Steyning, through Worthing to Angmering, Littlehampton and Arundel). Both Area A and Area B teams are located in Centenary House, Durrington Lane, Worthing.
- ☐ Area Mid (the north and eastern part of the county including Horsham, Haywards Heath, and Burgess Hill) is located in County Hall North, Chart Way, Horsham .
- ☐ Area North (Crawley)

Each area team is managed by an Area Senior Educational Psychologist, with overall leadership and management by the Principal Educational Psychologist.

## **3. Who does your service provide for?**

In West Sussex the service works primarily with children and young people from 0 – 25 who have been identified as having special educational needs (SEN) and where the Local Authority has requested assessment advice as part of their statutory duties under the Children and

Families Act 2014. Prior to this, early intervention may take place at an organisational level, indirectly through parents and teachers, and/or directly with individuals, groups, and families as part of strategic preventative working. The work of the Portage service is part of this early intervention for very young children with complex needs. For children in an educational setting intervention will normally be targeted towards meeting the needs of children and young people identified as requiring additional SEN support where the reasonable adjustments made by the school or setting have not achieved the agreed outcomes. The focus of the service therefore is:

- ☐ Young people with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP). This could include involvement in annual review processes and updated consultation, with a focus upon key transition points for the young person.
- ☐ Young people where an Education, Health and Care Needs Assessment has been initiated. We have a duty to provide psychological advice to the local authority as part of this process.
- ☐ Pre-school children who have been discussed at an Early Years Planning and Review Meeting (EYPARM) and where it has been agreed that EP involvement is appropriate.
- ☐ Young people who receive School Support, and where there are ongoing concerns about their progress despite targeted support implemented and reviewed over a period of time. This may include young people where other services have previously or currently remain involved, for example, Learning and Behaviour Advisory Teachers (LBATs) the Autism and Social Communication Team or Alternative Provision (AP).

#### **4. How can I start using the service?**

The Educational Psychology Service works through a consultation model where requests come either from schools and settings, through Early Years Planning and Review Meetings (EYPARMs) or from the SEN Assessment Team (SENAT) within the Local Authority. Pre-school children with developmental needs or disabilities will be brought to the attention of the EPS through the EYPARMs. If parents are concerned about their child and feel that they may have special educational needs the first course of action should be to discuss concerns with the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCo) in your child's school. There is a graduated response from the service which includes telephone consultation and requests for EP involvement. The service cannot take individual assessment requests from parents and works through schools and settings. Parents need to ensure that schools have used their best endeavours and the resources available to them to identify and meet needs. The service has also run workshops and "drop-in" sessions for parents at Parent Carer Forum Conferences and continues to explore how to increase parental access to the EP service.

#### **5. How are decisions made about who can use your service?**

Given the statutory nature of the service, requests for statutory advice and tasks arising from statutory duties take priority over other types of work. These requests come from the panel which considers requests for Education, Health and Care needs assessments to regular Area Allocation Meetings run by the Area Senior Educational Psychologists – telephone consultations are bookable by schools on a first come first served basis. Where schools are seeking EP input

parents should always have been fully involved in discussion with the school and have given their informed consent to any request for EP consultation or involvement.

## **6. How do you communicate with service users and how are they involved in decision making/planning?**

Following a psychological assessment for statutory advice parents receive a copy of the advice and are to feedback their views about the work undertaken. This feedback is collated and published as an annual evaluation report. Feedback is also requested from schools and other service users and this too contributes to the overall service evaluation. Parents always have the opportunity to discuss concerns with the EP when individual assessment work has been carried out and parental and child or young person's views will also be reflected in the assessment. Where necessary the EPS will request the provision of an interpreter for parental interviews. Consultations and assessments will agree and identify outcomes for the child or young person and the steps to be taken in order to help achieve these outcomes.

## **7. Is your service fully accessible?**

Wherever possible the EPs will normally see children and families in a familiar setting rather than an unfamiliar one; for most children this is likely to be their pre-school or school context or the family home. Schools and settings are required to have accessibility plans with regard to disabled pupils. Consultations or assessments very rarely take place within the county council buildings where the EPS offices are located.

## **8. What training are the staff supporting children and young people with SEND had or are having?**

All Educational Psychologists have undertaken postgraduate training following the completion of an undergraduate degree in psychology or an equivalent degree granting Graduate Basis for Chartered Membership of the British Psychological Society. The postgraduate training is now via a 3 year doctorate and the trainees are required to have substantial and varied experience in working with children and young people. Prior to the introduction of the 3 year course trainees were required to have a first degree in psychology (or equivalent) a 1 year postgraduate certificate in education (PGCE) or equivalent and have worked as a teacher for at least 2 years before undertaking a specialist postgraduate Master's degree. All Educational Psychologists are required to be registered with the Health Care Professions Council (HCPC) and undertake appropriate Continuing Professional Development in order to maintain their registration.

## **9. Who can I contact for further information?**

Further information on the EPS can be found on the West Sussex Services for Schools website. Alternatively you can contact the Area Teams using the following (table next page):

**Contact names are as follows:**

Principal Educational Psychologist	Cate Mullen cate.mullen@westsussex.gov.uk
Area West Senior Educational Psychologist	Gina Denner gina.denner@westsussex.gov.uk
Area South Senior Educational Psychologist	Carole Kite carole.kite@westsussex.gov.uk
Area Mid Senior Educational Psychologist	Andrea Morgan andrea.morgan@westsussex.gov.uk
Area North Senior Educational Psychologist	Clare Myall clare.myall@westsussex.gov.uk