

Educational Psychology Parent and Carer Guide

WHO ARE EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGISTS?

We are psychology graduates who have undertaken further professional training to specialise in educational psychology. This training allows us to understand how children develop and learn and what may affect their progress, well-being and behaviour.

We work for children and young people aged between 0 and 25 years. We often work with the other professionals supporting them, particularly school staff. We are registered with the Health Care Professionals Council (HCPC).

WHO MIGHT WE BE ASKED TO WORK WITH/FOR?

We can be asked to work with children and young people:

- who are finding it hard to learn
- whose behavior and/or mental health and wellbeing is causing concern
- whose development seems different from their peers
- who have identified needs affecting their development
- who have been affected by stress, anxiety or trauma

HOW DO WE WORK?

Our aim is to work with the most relevant people to come up with strategies that will help create positive change for children and young people, whilst also trying to understand the presenting difficulties.

This means our main way of working way is through consultation. A consultation is a problem-solving conversation usually between an educational psychologist and a member of school/nursery staff. We bring our knowledge of psychology, child development and special needs and school/nursery staff bring their knowledge of teaching and learning, the educational context and the child.

This is a graduated approach that allows us to become more involved if necessary. During consultation we may decide additional work would be helpful, for example, classroom observations, gaining your child's views, meeting with yourself.

If your child is having a statutory assessment of their special educational needs because they are likely to need a high level of specialist support, we are asked to complete a report known as psychological advice as part of this process. We would arrange to meet with you and your child as part of this process.

We aim to embody our core values of empathy, equality, integrity, respect, innovation and trust in all our work with children, families and staff.

HOW DO WE BECOME INVOLVED?

School staff will ask your permission to involve our service and complete an electronic consent form with yourself. We can only work for/with children and young people for whom we have parental consent.

A consultation will then be carried out with a member of school staff. If your child is in primary school or the early years this could either happen at a group consultation session or in an individual session at your child's school.

At group consultations a small group of other SENCOs are present and often a CAMHS practitioner. At early years group consultation a speech and language therapist is often present. Consulting in this way allows us to draw on the expertise of other professionals and other education settings. Confidentiality is maintained and children are referred to by their first name only.

School/nursery staff will tell you whether they would like to use group consultation or individual consultation to support your child.

At high school consultation occurs with a member of staff or small group of staff from that setting.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

Following consultation, a written consultation record will be produced which will detail suggestions and agreed actions. School staff will be asked to go through this document with you, explaining what strategies they will be using in school.

We also keep a copy of consultation records and reports in a secure and confidential electronic file about your child. We often need to share written information with others who are working with your child and anyone who receives a copy will be listed on the record. You can ask to see your child's file.

We encourage school staff to engage in cycles of assess-plan-do-review to help meet children's needs. Further consultations can form part of this cycle. If we think it would be helpful to carry out additional types of work school staff will let you know what this is and when it will happen.

DO WE MEET WITH PARENTS/CARERS?

The initial consultation is usually with school or nursery staff. However sometimes it can be helpful to carry out joint consultations with parents/carers and school/nursery staff. If there is ongoing involvement parents/carers may be invited to future consultations.

If you would like to speak to the educational psychologist who will be consulting about your child you can ask school staff to let them know and they will contact you. We will always meet with or speak with you if your child is undergoing a statutory assessment.