

Educational Psychology Service

Core Functions.

EPs are expected to work within the codes of conduct of the Association of Educational Psychologists and the Division of Educational and Child Psychology of the British Psychological Society. Information about the EPS is available in the EPS Information file in each base.

The EPS is free of charge to schools and all pre-school providers. Continuous review of the range of customers and services offered is in place with regular evaluation carried out.

The EPS provides a time allocated consultative service to mainstream schools, special schools and units, nurseries and pre-school children, liaising regularly with LABSS, IDS and PRU, Education Social Workers, and with colleagues in other Education, Health and Social Care teams. The Service offers a problem-solving/solution focused style of psychological input and operates at 3 levels, the organisational, group and individual child levels. EP activities are set in the context of the annual development work plan.

Main aim of the Educational Psychology Service

Recent Government advice recommends that Educational Psychologists should have involvement beyond SEN and should address, in a systemic way, issues of school effectiveness. Warwickshire Educational Psychology Service therefore uses a consultation and solution focused model of service delivery. These approaches focus on seeking positive and productive ways forward rather than on deficit and reasons for failure.

Our main aim therefore is to promote the psychological and educational development of all children and young people by:

- promoting child development and learning through the application of psychology by working with individual and groups of children, teachers and other adults in schools, families, other LA officers, health and social care teams and other agencies by providing consultative support, advice and assessments using a range of interventions;
- providing a high quality, consultative service to enhance the education of all Warwickshire children, in particular those with special educational needs, within the framework of the County's policies, the 1996 Education Act and other government legislation;
- assisting the LA in meeting its statutory duties and responsibilities within agreed time limits;
- contributing to SEN policy development together with others in the education department;
- promoting the development of all children in a positive learning environment;
- providing advice, support and training, to teachers, parents and other professionals, regarding the education of children at the whole school, group and individual levels in order to raise levels of achievement and increase organisational effectiveness;
- working collaboratively with other services and agencies to provide support for children and their families, and to address the educational needs of children;
- providing independent psychological advice to the LA on the special educational needs of individual children (including those referred under the 1996 Education Act), and on general educational issues;
- providing training placements for those entering the profession;
- conforming to professional codes of practice and ethics;

Main Aims

These may be summarised as

- To promote the best interests of children and young people by assessing need leading to modification of the learning environment to progress learning.
- To input to school improvement/pupil achievement.

General Aims And Objectives

- to enhance the development of ALL children with or without special needs, so they can lead full and useful lives.
- to provide statutory psychological advice on children's special educational needs in line with the Education Act 1966.
- to provide advice and support, mainly to teachers and parents, in the management and education of children.
- to offer consultation about whole school development and school improvement particularly in relation to children with special needs.
- to work co-operatively with other agencies to provide support for children and their families.
- to advise the Local Authority on special educational needs and on general educational issues and policies.
- to provide training to teachers and others as commissioned.

Pre-School Arrangements

Strategic development and operational issues are managed by the PEP who is a member of the SEN Early Years Strategy group. Within the area teams there are designated EPs who have responsibility for pre-school work liaising with colleagues on a regular basis.

Main responsibilities of pre-school and specialist pre-school EP

- To liaise with PEP on policy and practice re training issues.
- To liaise with SEN officers, and be involved with pre-school panels.
- To carry out statutory assessments and early years action plus assessments in assessment nurseries except where it is agreed that it is more appropriate for the Specialist EP to do so.
- To provide a consultative service to Child Development Centres and attend a termly meeting with CDC staff.
- To be involved in development (non-case) work in non LEA maintained settings with IDS staff.
- To liaise with other pre-school service staff
- To be involved in planning and delivering training to pre-school SENCO's and other pre-school providers (commissioned by the Early Years and Childcare Partnership).
- To represent EPS on various groups, working parties etc and take on commissioned tasks as requested.

Educational Psychology and Educational Psychologists

Psychology is the science study of how people feel, think and behave. Educational psychology is concerned with children's learning, understanding and relationships with others. It is the application of psychology to education.

Educational Psychologists have an Honours degree in psychology, professional teaching qualifications, teaching experience and post graduate qualifications in Educational Psychology. This background and training together with experience and links with other professionals in Education, Health and Social Care teams place educational psychologists in a key position to advise and make recommendations on a wide spectrum of educational matters.

An Educational Psychologist attempts to discover how a child is interpreting and understanding his/her world. One of the primary purposes is to devise and suggest positive courses of action for all concerned drawing on a range of theories and techniques from within psychology. An Educational Psychologist's work is governed by strict adherence to professional codes of practice and ethics.

Educational Psychologists help school staff to use psychology to increase effectiveness and to identify and provide for children with the greatest level of need.

Educational Psychologists are trained to have:

- a thorough and sound knowledge of Psychology and its applications in an educational context;
- an understanding of child development and the factors which facilitate healthy emotional development;
- a knowledge of current understanding of how children learn both at home and in school and factors contributing to special educational needs;
- an appreciation of the working of schools as learning environments and the role of teachers and others within them;
- knowledge of the dynamics of schools as organisations and the effect that different teaching styles, and school and classroom management techniques, have on children's learning;
- the ability to work with a range of people including parents and Health and Social Service professionals for the good of the child. This includes helping to facilitate inclusion;
- highly developed interpersonal, communication and social skills;
- an understanding of how to achieve change in complex social settings;
- the ability to deploy research and development skills in support of the above.

The Legal Basis of the Educational Psychology Service (EPS)

The LA has a statutory duty under the 1996 Education Act and the associated SEN Code of Practice to seek psychological advice when determining whether a child has special educational needs. The Educational Psychology Service is involved in helping the LA to fulfil its statutory duties in respect of the special educational needs of children and young people. The Educational Psychology Service also has an important role in supporting Central Government Education and Social Inclusion Agendas.

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Services the Educational Psychologists in Warwickshire provide

Educational Psychologists work in schools, special schools and units, early years settings and in close co-operation with other LA support services, with Social Care teams, the PCT and other agencies outside the Local Authority. They work directly with children and young people, with parents, teachers or other professionals involved with them. The kinds of problems investigated include a variety of learning difficulties, behavioural and emotional difficulties, communication and sensory and physical difficulties, which can appear in school and at home. The service is committed to involving parents and psychological reports are always sent directly to parents.

- The Educational Psychology Service works increasingly towards inclusion, ensuring that children's needs can be met mostly within mainstream schools or if this is not possible or practicable, within the LA's own special schools and units.

The Educational Psychology Service provides a consultation model of service delivery which offers:

- help to the person most concerned to effect change, usually the teacher, and addresses work at different levels within the school; a collaborative style of work, exploring and developing ideas and skills relevant to the classroom and school context; an opportunity to explore possible explanations and understandings of school based problems in a collaborative way using theories from psychology and provides:
- A time allocated, problem-solving approach for all mainstream and special schools, nurseries and units operating at three levels: the organisational, group and individual child levels;
- A consultative service to Child Development Centres;.
- Assistance in implementing the SEN Code of Practice;
- Consultation on schools' SEN policies;
- Assessment of some children with SEN including pre-school children, after receipt of parental permission and following consultation with schools and support services;

- Statutory assessment under the 1996 Education Act to provide a profile of needs;
- Liaison with colleagues in other Education Services and in Health and Social Services;
- Involvement in Annual Reviews of children with Statements of special educational needs to ensure needs are accurately identified, being met and progress is being made;
- Liaison with LA officers in terms of policy development and evaluation of educational provision;
- Attendance at SEN tribunals;
- Project work within schools and the LA;
- Work on developing appropriate measures of achievement and effectiveness;
- Reporting to schools and the LA on the relevance of current research for implementation;
- Training/staff development including LA centrally based training;