



# Briefing Report for Schools Forum

To: Schools Forum

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Title of Briefing: Educational Psychology Update report

Please tick one box only for question 1 and 2.

1. Is this a strategic issue report  or operational issue report?

2. Decision Required  Debate  Information Only

**What is/are the issue(s)/aim(s) of the document: (Bullet points only)**

To provide an update to the schools forum on the Educational Psychology Service

**Outline of main decision(s):  
(Complete only if a decision is required.)**

**Expected outcome(s):**

Schools Forum to have an overview in relation to the

- Role and responsibilities of the Educational Psychology Service
- Allocation of Educational Psychology resources
- Schools and Service Level Agreement
- Working group and impact
- Challenges and next steps

## **1 Role and responsibilities of the Educational Psychology Service**

The Educational Psychology Service promotes the use of evidence based practice to promote social and emotional well-being and academic progress across the ability range in our population of children and young people aged 0 to 25 years.

The team is funded from finance from the Local Authority and the Service Level Agreement with schools.

## **2 Allocation of Educational Psychology Resources to support the functions of the Local Authority**

The Educational Psychology Service provides the following services to support the functions of the Local Authority

They carry out new requests for Statutory Assessments

They support the process to transfer Statements into Education Health and Care plans

They support the local Authority in the assessment of identified complex cases

- Attendance /Assessment at Out of Borough reviews for Looked after Children
- Assessment / intervention of the Electively Home Educated
- Assessment / intervention new arrivals into borough – not yet in school placement
- Bereavement and Critical Incident support work

### **2.1 New requests for Statutory assessments**

New requests for Statutory assessments within North Tyneside currently lie at 3.8% of the population of children. North Tyneside is identified as a Local Authority with a high number of Statutory assessments. There are examples nationally where referrals for Statutory assessments lie at 0.9%. This has direct impact on the Educational Psychology service facing an increased demand for timely delivery of reports.

### **2.2 Transfer Statements into Education Health and Care plans**

The Educational Psychology team works closely with the Statutory Assessment team. Performance targets are in place to ensure timely conversion of Statements into Education Health and Care plans to ensure full conversion by March 2018. The teams jointly prioritise those cases where Educational Psychology needs to be involved.

### **2.3 Support with Complex Cases**

The Educational Psychology team support the local Authority in “targeted” cases where Education Health and Care teams are involved in meeting outcomes for children with the most complex needs.

## **3 Schools and Service Level Agreement**

### **3.1 Schools and Allocation of work for the Educational Psychology service**

Schools continue to draw on the experience of in house Educational Psychology service. The Educational Psychologists work with Head Teachers and Special Educational Needs Co-ordinators in identifying work priorities.

### **3.2 Costs of the Service Level Agreement**

Schools currently pay £400 per day for Educational Psychology services within North Tyneside.

The SLA cost for 2016 – 2017 is £400 per day for days purchased up to 15<sup>th</sup> April and £428 per day for days purchased on or after 16<sup>th</sup> April. This reduced timeframe for purchasing days at the cheaper rate is hoped to encourage schools to purchase earlier, so that demand and capacity can be understood and addressed more promptly.

This rate is comparable with neighbours e.g. Newcastle whose current rate is £420 per day. Going forward consideration will be given to obtaining full cost recovery with agreed quality Assurance indicators.

#### **4 The working group to support the Development of the Educational Psychology service with Head teacher and Senco colleagues**

The group started to meet late in 2015. The impact to date has been :-

The Educational Psychology team are now emailing reports to schools to enable access to information in the shortest time possible.

**Report / Advice turn around: below are the figures of summer term and autumn term reporting so that progress can be seen.**

	<b>Summer Term 2015</b>	<b>Autumn Term 2015</b>
% of Reports turned around within 4 weeks:	<b>50%</b>	<b>90%</b> <i>(76% of reports were distributed within 3 weeks of last involvement)</i>
% of Statutory Advice submitted in accordance with LA timeframe	<b>48%</b>	<b>96%</b>

These figures indicate that there has been a 40% increase in SLA reports hitting the 4 week turnaround and a 48% increase in meeting statutory deadlines for psychological advice. There are exceptional circumstances noted against the few reports/advice which did not meet deadlines.

A flexible approach to reporting has been introduced which means reports can be shorter and fit for purpose. There is to be less focus on historic data and greater analysis of current context and next steps. Jargon used is reduced and test data is to be moved into appendices to allow for easier reading. The All Together Better parent group has agreed to offer feedback on EP reports and the working group will also provide feedback over time on the impact of the new reporting style.

Educational Psychologists are routinely offering feedback meetings in order discuss assessment findings and co-construct with parents/carers and schools next steps for the child / young person. EPs are negotiating with individual schools whether reports are to be sent out in advance of feedback meetings, or written up following the meetings so to include the agreed next steps. EPs have found that schools have different preferences in relation to this so it has been agreed that EPs will negotiate a preferred working arrangement in each of their schools.

This information gathered by EPs will support our joint understanding of the number of interventions provided to a young person and their impact. The working group supports that cyclical involvement of the EP is thought to be best practice as opposed to calling in the EP to do one off assessments. Involving the EP in the plan-do-review cycle around a child can help the school and family better understand the child's needs and help to monitor the child's progress over time.

Core to the development of quality assurance processes all service users of Educational Psychology services shall be given the opportunity to feedback on the Educational Psychology service using an electronic questionnaire format after each cycle of involvement. A new questionnaire is also being devised for gathering HT/ SENCO views on generic aspects of Service delivery at the end of the SLA year.

The All Together Better parent group have worked with the Educational Psychology service to ensure that up to date, quality information about the Service is on the Local Offer. This group has also assisted the Service in devising a leaflet for parents / teenagers, which can provide additional information at the point of referral. This leaflet will be available to all schools later this term. An information leaflet for younger children is also being written.

The working group encourages the development of an Educational Psychology service that provides both support and challenge. The working group has supported an approach to the learning trust. The trust has funded additional days of Educational Psychology time to support an action research programme, which will maximise outcomes for children, but train educators as part of the project. Over time the Service can audit the impact of action research and its ability to effect change.

The working group identified working memory and ADHD as possible topics for action research. As working memory difficulties and attention difficulties are often two sides of the same coin the EPS are proposing the following theme as the focus for the action research project:

Classroom strategies for increasing engagement in learning opportunities, for children with short term retention difficulties and / or attention difficulties.

Each school who volunteers to be involved in the project will identify a named person who will carry out action research in their own school, under the guidance and supervision of an EP. Initial training will be given and ongoing support offered. A summary of the research carried out, across all the volunteering schools; the results; and the learning will be disseminated to all NTLT schools.

## **5 Challenges in going forward**

The ability to provide permanent posts whilst managing the financial risk of employing staff without assurance of continued / additional buy in. Currently schools only buy-in for 12 months at a time.

Reducing the demand from schools for a deficit model approach and maximise evidence based interventions.

To maximise early interventions to reduce the increase in demand for statutory assessments.

To provide Educational Psychology services to maximise intervention at the earliest point.

To increase knowledge of the services provided by the Educational Psychology team through action and co production

### **5.1 Next steps**

To develop our business model to maximise input to children with the most complex needs at the earliest time possible. This will require shared use of school and Educational Psychologists

expertise. This will include the development of therapeutic approaches with children with complex emotional social and mental health needs working with the child and parents.

The development of accredited training to support others to work with children with ESMH needs

Development and implementation of training courses e.g. Restorative Justice in Schools training programme

Introduce evidence based interventions to maximise outcomes for children and support staff development e.g. The use of video enhanced observations.

To consider funding models which secure the required EP capacity to meet demand and allow the Service to operate in line with desired outcomes and hit performance indicators.