

## PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICE

### SUPPORTING INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

#### About Psychological Service

As a Community Authority, West Dunbartonshire Education and Cultural Services Department has established social inclusion as a key principle of its service delivery. The Department provides a number of specialist services that assist schools and Early Years Centres in supporting pupils who have a wide range of needs.

The Psychological Service is part of these Specialist Services within the Education Department. It is a statutory provision for children and young persons aged 0 to 25 years including those who have additional needs.

The strategic purpose of the Psychological Service is to apply psychological knowledge, skills and expertise to contribute to the Council's policy and practice in meeting the needs of children and young people in relation to their learning, behaviour and development.

#### Core Tasks

The statutory basis of Psychological Services is very wide ranging. It is estimated that 1 in 5 children may have additional support needs at some point in their childhood and adolescence. These needs may arise from

- the learning environment
- family circumstances
- the child's disabilities or health needs
- social and emotional difficulties

The Educational Psychologist is trained to deliver a service that has five core tasks:

#### Assessment and Intervention

This involves the assessment of the child or young person in the context of their class and school, their home and in the wider community. The Psychologist works collaboratively with all the key adults in a child's life. A wide range of activities and techniques is used with the aim of planning and enabling effective intervention.

#### Consultation and Advice

The Psychological Service offers consultation and advice in order to empower schools, Early Years Centres, parents and other agencies to develop action plans that support all aspects of the children's learning and behaviour. Each school has a liaison psychologist to facilitate this process. The Service also advises the Education Department on the resource implications of a child or young person's additional support needs.

#### Staff Development

The Psychological Service supports the Education Department in the continuous professional development of its staff by regularly delivering training to school staff, both teaching and non-teaching, to other agencies and to parents. Some examples include developmental disorders including autism, Asperger's Syndrome, ADHD and dyslexia as well as behaviour management and emotional competence in the Early Years.

#### Policy Development

The Psychological Service also supports the Education Department in contributing to the development of policy relating to many aspects of educational provision. Examples include the development of support for young people with an autistic spectrum condition and the development of Nurture Groups for young children.

#### Research and Evaluation

Considerable research is undertaken by the Service in order to inform the Education Department of the Council on the effectiveness of a number of initiatives. Examples include the evaluation of the effectiveness of the base for Secondary age pupils who are on the autistic spectrum, the evaluation of transition arrangements, the evaluation of a range of initiatives funded by the Changing Children's Service Fund.

#### The Psychological Service

The Service is organised in one team based in Dumbarton. The current staffing consists of 9 FTE Educational Psychologists, an Assistant Psychologist and 2.5 clerical assistants.

The training of an Educational Psychologist takes at least 9 years and covers all aspects of child development and learning. Educational Psychologists require to be chartered with the British Psychological Society.

Educational Psychologists are expected to have:

- Knowledge of child development.
- Knowledge of particular learning and/or social and emotional difficulties that can arise.
- Knowledge of a range of developmental conditions
- Knowledge of approaches to learning which enable children and young people
- Skills in the analysis of problems and in problem-solving at various levels: the child, the family, the school, the community.
- Skills in counselling and solution focused approaches.
- Skills in research and evaluation.

#### Requests for Involvement

Requests for involvement can be made by schools, the Social Work department, Health Personnel and by parents/carers or young people themselves.

As the majority of requests for involvement come from schools and Early Years Centres, each school or Centre has an educational psychologist allocated to provide a regular visiting service. The amount of time allocated to each establishment is based on the numbers on the school roll and the deprivation indicators normally used by the Council to denote greater need.

The Educational Psychologist and relevant staff of the school or Centre negotiate and agree the service delivery each year. It may include any of the core tasks such as consultation, assessment and staff development or research. A service delivery agreement is drawn up annually and a Record of Service Delivery is completed after every visit.

A Request for Involvement of the Educational Psychologist should be made formally by the school or Early Years Centre by completion of the relevant document. When this has

been completed, discussion with the Psychologist will identify the appropriate response e.g. a consultation meeting with parents etc, an Inset for staff, advice only etc.

#### The Consultation meeting

##### At a Consultation Meeting

- the Educational Psychologist will chair and complete the relevant document and circulate it to all who attended the meeting.
- written permission to exchange information with other agencies will be sought from the parents/carers and where appropriate from the young person.
- if an assessment has been carried out the Psychologist will provide a report for the parents and distribute this to relevant personnel as agreed with the parent.

#### Contact Details

Shona Crawford  
Principal Educational Psychologist  
Psychological Service  
c/o Carleith Primary School  
Stark Avenue  
Duntocher  
Clydebank  
G81 6EF

Tel: 01389 800491  
Fax: 01389 873693

Email:

[Shona.crawford@west-dunbarton.gov.uk](mailto:Shona.crawford@west-dunbarton.gov.uk)