



## **EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY SERVICE**

### **VALIDATED SELF EVALUATION**

#### **Self Evaluation of Themes**

## National Theme 1 – How can SBC EPS most effectively support SBC schools to improve the quality of teaching and learning?

### Where are we now?

*The Educational Psychology Service (EPS), in consultation with its Local Authority (LA) strategic partners, recognises that the EPS is currently deployed broadly in terms of its work to support a large number of individual children and young people and a wide range of systemic level work, operating at a range of levels. This work is generally positively regarded but there is an identified need to review this deployment to ensure that the service provides best value in terms of efficiently targeting its capacity in the areas of individual and strategic work. The service reflection, from its own data and self-evaluation, supported by LA strategic partners is that this requires greater clarity of focus in both areas and a shift of some EPS capacity towards more strategic work. The agreed LA focus for the EPS has been agreed as being dyslexia, literacy and closing the gap.*

- The EPS consultation model provides the means for the service to support effective teaching and learning practice in respect of large numbers of individual children and young people. Schools consider that the EPS provides effective consultation and advice and work effectively to achieve positive outcomes for children and young people. Parents and carers feel that EPs contribute effectively to meetings. The work of the EPS to support the inclusion of individual children and young people is valued by schools and a range of other stakeholders. There is a high demand for casework including attendance at Meetings Around the Child (MAC) which the EPS plans to evaluate to ensure best use of individual EP time.
  - The EPS makes an effective contribution to the inclusion of children with additional support needs through building capacity of schools to support a range of complex needs.
  - The EPS has responded flexibly to support the responsive and agile authority strategy to improving the quality of teaching and learning. To support the development of EPS capacity to support teaching and learning, an EPS teaching and learning group was established. This group's roles have included auditing knowledge and skills across the EP team; identifying areas of professional development need within the team; mapping current service delivery across teaching and learning priorities locally; providing advice on the authority Literacy Strategy; and responding to requests from SBC's Professional Learning Operations Group (PLOG) for guidance on the use of video to support pedagogic practice in the classroom. Additionally, the EP Service has actively contributed to several other authority level strategic groups some of which are no longer active within current priorities (for example, Numeracy Strategy Group, Complex Needs Review Group, Inclusion Group, SEBN Review Group).
  - The EPS has identified business and cross-cutting objectives to support the establishment of an improvement plan linked explicitly to the LA Education plan. The EPS is engaged to support several key strategic initiatives to improve outcomes for children and young people. The Service has restructured its working groups to align with the responsive LA strategy which is responding to local and national policy development as well as practice improvement evidenced through self-evaluation, LA review processes and school leader engagement meetings. Head Teacher and Officer strategic groups are developing as one mechanism for the development of strategy and EPs have been contributing to these groups. There are a range of methodologies in development to secure school improvement; EPS involvement will be considered and assessed
- Self Evaluation of Themes

to ensure the roles of the EPS is developed in a way which secures best outcomes for children and young people whilst maximising the potential of the EPS. The EPS worked at LA level in the following areas:

- Dyslexia – multiagency collaboration led by EPS to draft LA policy. The EPS provided training on the draft policy to launch consultation to all educational establishments within SBC. The EPS designed and conducted consultation with stakeholder groups and ongoing evaluation of implementation in partnership with Support for Learning Teachers.
- The EPS has had a significant training role at LA level that includes a range of contributions to the central CPD directory (e.g. Nurture, Lego Club training, Education of Looked After Children) as well as training provided eg to specific teams and staff (eg head teachers, NQT's, supply teachers).
- The EPS can evidence a broad range of training at establishment and local level which is indicative of the service's responsiveness to locally identified teachers' CPD needs. The EPS can evidence sustained and substantial delivery of training across contexts in the following areas:
  - Literacy – e.g. POLAAR, phonological assessment and interventions, reading comprehension, reciprocal reading, literacy difficulties, dyslexia, fine motor skills and writing.
  - Numeracy – supporting assessment, intervention and effective teaching in numeracy.
  - Learning environment (physical and pedagogic).
  - Supporting differentiation and supporting learners with identified additional support needs, e.g. pupils with ASD, ADHD and pupils who are Looked After and Accommodated.
  - Use of video based approaches to support pedagogic practice.
  - Practitioner Enquiry
  - Supporting pedagogical capacity of Learning Support Teachers and Additional Needs Assistants through a CPD model based upon a locality peer support network.
- The EPS is involved in a range of work at school and cluster level. This year the EPS has been involved in supporting, as part of a co-ordinated multi-agency project, the Closing the Gap Scottish Attainment Challenge project at Burnfoot Community Primary School, Hawick.
- The EPS has supported curriculum development for senior phase pupils with complex needs, including those in enhanced provisions, through contribution to an authority level working group.

### **How do we know?**

- Training logs and evaluations
- Stakeholder feedback and discussion
- Service activity data
- PRD Meetings
- Dyslexia consultation data and analyses and evaluation

- Papers generated by work led by and/or contributed to by EPS
- Publications
- Service self-evaluative activity.

### **What are our strengths?**

- There is a shared value base across the EPS and an increasingly shared and coherent approach to practice informed by theory and research evidence.
- Consultation, assessment and intervention regarding children and young people with additional support needs is associated with development in schools of appropriate support arrangements, and contributes to positive outcomes.
- EPS contribution to conceptualisation, training, policy and practice development in Literacy and Dyslexia, working with SfL staff to develop the policy, consult on the policy with a range of stakeholders and support implementation in schools. The expertise and skills of EPs in a number of areas linked to learning and teaching are used to build capacity in others within the team and externally. There is a strong commitment to develop this further by further aligning service priorities and capacity to work at scale to implement LA priorities.
- There is an ongoing commitment to professional development, dissemination of good practice and new research within the team. Skills have been audited and 2 of the 3 working groups have a teaching and learning focus. Group membership is rotated. EPs also share knowledge at the EPS development days and through EP team reading and reflection exercises. Learning is incorporated into ongoing training delivered internally and externally. EPs across the team demonstrate a high level of self-direction in identifying and developing opportunities for training and development activities which will build capacity within schools. To maximise impact EPs actively collaborate on design and delivery of these activities in order to generalise knowledge and skills across the team.

### **Where are our challenges?**

- To prioritise strategic development work within the context of a high level of demand for support with individual children and young people. To effectively promote the role the EPS can have in contributing to school improvement activities and wider teaching and learning development.
- To work systemically with school/establishments and the LA to apply EPS knowledge and skills in applied psychology at scale to inform changing practices at universal level, particularly in order to raise attainment in relation to dyslexia, literacy and closing the gap.
- To embed self-evaluation activities within teaching and learning practice. To develop approaches that would allow us to evaluate impact of EPS training and development activities longitudinally.

## What do we need to find out more about?

1. We need to find out more about the key factors in effective work to support individual children and young people. This will inform redesign of our model of service delivery with the aim of maximising efficient use of the EPS in promoting positive outcomes for children and young people, and in building capacity within schools.

Key questions include:

- i) We need to explore the range of school evaluations with regard to EPS contributions to consultation, assessment & intervention in order to better understand the factors underpinning positive or negative evaluations. Specifically, we need to clarify what aspects of our casework are associated with most efficient delivery of positive impact for individual learners, and with building capacity in schools.
- ii) We need to explore the range of parent/carer evaluations with regard to how helpful EP involvement was for their child and how far our service met with their expectations. Specifically, we need to clarify what aspects of our casework are associated with the greatest positive impact.
- iii) We need to consider the implications arising from i) and ii) above to determine the priority to be given to the various categories of EPS casework activity currently undertaken. This analysis will inform redesign of our service delivery model.

2. In order to maximise the impact of our capacity-building activity we need to find out more about the key factors in effective EPS development work. We will focus particularly on EPS activity in relation to dyslexia, literacy and closing the gap. This enquiry will inform review of our model of service delivery with the aim of maximising our contribution to raising attainment for all children and young people, and to closing the attainment gap, through strategic development work.

Key questions include:

- i) We need to explore further the factors informing SBC school stakeholder feedback regarding EP contribution to school strategic planning, CLPL of staff and research and development.
- ii) We need to identify the implications for improvement by exploring with LA partners how the EPS can use identified service strengths most effectively and efficiently to contribute to authority-wide developments focusing on literacy, dyslexia and closing the gap.
- iii) We need to consider the implications from above in order to determine how EPS capacity can be used most effectively, particularly to support schools to deliver the attainment agenda.
- iv) We need to consider the implications for clarifying and communicating the role and remit of the EP at a range of levels.

3. We need to explore how we can improve our approaches to evaluation of the long term impact of our own work in relation to teaching and learning, with particular reference to literacy, dyslexia and closing the gap. We also need to explore with strategic partners how the EPS can most effectively contribute to the design and implementation of long-term evaluation in respect of teaching and learning developments across the Authority.

## National Theme 2 – How can the EPS work most effectively with partners to improve outcomes for children and young people?

### Where are we now?

*Service self-evaluation based on stakeholder survey data and other feedback is that the service provides effective partnership and consultation and advice. The service and its strategic LA partners recognise the need to increase the overall contribution of the service to development work to support identified LA strategic priorities. Data is held suggesting that some areas of individual work are not so critical as others. There is a need to: i) identify the areas where EP consultation and advice at an individual level is most (and least) critical and; ii) re-focus, and realign the service so that the capacity of the service is most efficiently deployed to support both individual and strategic work within the context of overall strategic priorities.*

- The EPS is committed to the aims and values of GIRFEC and takes this forward by developing partnerships with schools and key agencies with particular reference to children and families. The EPS works to the local partnership 4 stage GIRFEC model and consultation with the EPS begins from level 2. In practice EPS ranges across the levels. The main process for engagement with the EPS is the EPS consultation model and the majority of case work is delivered within this approach to service delivery alongside our key stakeholders and partner agencies.
- EPs regularly facilitate Person Centred Planning approaches at individual casework level as a way of enabling the young person to participate in the planning processes, and to ensure adult focus on the young person's wellbeing. EPs also engage in interventions with individual young people to support key aspects of wellbeing, such as attuned interaction, reciprocal relationships and social connectedness, for example Circle of Friends, Lego Club, VIG, small group Philosophy for Children. The EPS has provided a broad range of training at establishment and local level in areas including nurture, person centred planning and restorative practice.
- The EPS is represented through the PEP on the CYP Directorate. The PEP provides consultation and advice to a very wide range of LA and partnership groups, undertakes commissioned pieces of work as requested and oversees several externally commissioned service contracts with partner agencies.
- Identified EPs are linked to identified LA strategic groups. These EPs represent working groups established by the EPS to support the strategic priorities of the wider service which includes the LA Inclusion group. An EPS action and improvement plan is being finalised which will link formally to the LA C&YP plan and capture the increasing strategic contributions being made by the EPS.
- A central strategic group comprising of HTS and other key partners is currently leading the CYP vision of Inclusion for All. EPS has a key role in this group, sharing educational research and re-shaping the Inclusion and Wellbeing Service. As detailed in earlier sections, a core EPS contribution, building on earlier work, has been to provide psychologically informed conceptualisation of behaviour and wellbeing and research informed interventions to support practices which promote wellbeing and healthy relationships and pupil agency in schools. A policy for positive relationships and behaviour in learning settings is currently in draft form and

is being shared with all HTs with a view to receiving feedback and making amendments or enhancements where necessary.

- The policy includes summary guidance, from the EPS, on a range of systemic interventions to support delivery of positive outcomes in this area at a whole school level. The EPS provided consultation re associated and appropriate dissemination and delivery of the policy which is scheduled to be adopted in June 2017. The EPS has also had a lead role in developing the CYP Service Better Relationships policy with school partners. The EPS has supported schools to develop their own Better Relationships policies to reflect emergent local and national guidance. Linked to this, the EPS as part of its strategic and partnership priorities, is advising the LA in its implementation of the Growing in Confidence initiative. Growing in Confidence complements the approaches that the EPS have consistently promoted through its own training and development activity and in its partnership with the City of Edinburgh Council EPS highlights the value of broader collaboration when relevant and appropriate.
- The EP Service is represented on the Early Years strategic partnership group. The PEP chairs the partnership Psychology of Parenting (PoPP) Operational Group which has delivered significant positive outcomes for children in Scottish Borders and is positively evaluated externally. The EPS additionally supports this initiative through engaging with colleagues as part of an inter-disciplinary delivery group to provide training in Connecting with Parents' Motivations. This training has been positively evaluated at point of delivery.
- The EPS has longstanding partnership links with a range of external partners maintained through ongoing work at a range of levels including a variety of multi-agency groups. Areas of strong practice currently identified with partners include the Additional Needs Multi-agency Management Team (ANMaT), which oversees all LA Co-ordinated Support Plans (CSPs), referrals for early years support and requests for repeat and advance years. The service has also been jointly engaged over a number of years with the local branch of Dyslexia Scotland in ongoing work to support the development and promotion of the LA dyslexia policy. Training on the policy has been provided to the Community Learning & Development team (CLD) team as part of the contribution by the service to building capacity at a community level. Over the past year or so the service has collaborated in a whole-school joint initiative with Speech and Language Therapy to support an Attainment Challenge school.
- The EP Service has developed particularly strong links with Children and Families SW at a local level reinforced by local deployment of EPs to inter-disciplinary locality teams over several years. This has been additionally reinforced by the move by EPS to an integrated record system – Frameworki in August 2015.
- The Children's Services Inspection highlighted the need to review processes such as MACs, a key forum of current activity for EPs. It is expected that the outcome of this review will align with the ambition of the EPS to be operating across consistent thresholds of activity securing the most impact possible on children and young peoples' lives



### **How do we know?**

- Training logs and evaluations
- Stakeholder feedback and discussion
- Service activity data
- PRD Meetings
- Papers generated by work led by and/or contributed to by EPS
- Publications
- Service self-evaluative activity
- Inclusion Group SWOT analysis
- Wilton Support Centre School Review report.

### **What are our challenges?**

- Tension between EP deployment to area offices and the need for greater professional support for EPs from EPs.
- Tension between EPs deployment to local area offices and effective achievement of EPS engagement in central LA level systemic working, planning processes and operational decisions.
- To work systemically with school/establishments and the LA to apply EPS knowledge and skills in applied psychology at scale to inform changing practices at universal level, particularly in order to support health and wellbeing. The agreed focus for this work is to support implementation of the inclusion policy with a particular role for EPS to build capacity through supporting implementation of the better relationships initiative.
- Effective joint working at the strategic level with multi-agency partners; stakeholder feedback indicates the EP contribution to CLPL of other agency practitioners is an area that requires development.

### **What are our strengths?**

- The service has achieved sustained engagement and continuity of involvement of EPs in complex and challenging cases which has been an important factor in pursuing positive outcomes for particularly vulnerable young people.
- The EPS has a shared coherent psychologically-informed approach to wellbeing, which enables us to make an invaluable contribution to the authority's work on pupil wellbeing. This is evident at the level of shared value-base and consistent theoretical / conceptual understanding which is demonstrated across service development work including consultation to the LA and training. The EPS has developed a substantial body of training materials linked to health and wellbeing, and have worked collaboratively on the design and delivery of training materials in order to support an increasingly shared and coherent approach to practice and the generalisation of knowledge and skills across the team.
- Stakeholder feedback strongly acknowledges the service's positive contribution in respect of ethicality, inclusiveness and respectful relationships.

## What do we need to find out more about?

1. We need to find out more about the key factors in effective partnership working to support individual children and young people. This will inform redesign of our model of service delivery with the aim of maximising efficient use of the EPS in promoting positive outcomes for children and young people, and in building capacity with partners.

Key questions include:

- i) We need to explore the range of practitioner and parent /carer evaluations with regard to EPS contributions to positive outcomes for individual children and young people. This will consider the range of EP involvement but will include a focus on cases where EPs have sustained, intensive involvement in complex situations where effective partnership working is especially critical. This will help us better understand the factors informing positive or negative evaluations. Specifically, we need to clarify what aspects of our casework are associated with most efficient delivery of positive impact for individual children and young people, and with building capacity with partners.
  - ii) We need to consider the implications arising from the above to determine the priority to be given to sustained, intensive casework within a service delivery model.
  - iii) We need to consider how we can improve communication about work undertaken and ongoing; and clarify to key stakeholders, in particular, parents/carers and practitioners how they can access and maintain contact with the EP Service.
2. In order to maximise the impact of our capacity-building activity we need to find out more about the key factors in effective development work with partners. We will focus particularly on EPS activity in relation to inclusion including implementation of the better relationships initiative and consultation to support implementation of Growing in Confidence. This enquiry will inform review of our model of service delivery in order to maximise our contribution to the holistic wellbeing of children and young people through development work at the universal level. This should include consideration of how we will emphasise early intervention and wider community impact. Key questions include:
    - i) We need to explore with relevant stakeholders how EPS development capacity can be used most efficiently to support partners to promote pupil wellbeing with an emphasis on whole school approaches and early intervention. This will involve an evaluative review with partners of work undertaken in this area to inform how EPS can most efficiently contribute to capacity building with partners. A key focus for considering the EPS contribution will be provided by the better relationships initiative and the Inclusion Group evaluation of current needs.
    - ii) We need to consider the implications for clarifying and communicating the nature and scope of our role and remit of the EP to partners at a range of levels.
  3. We need to explore how we can improve our approaches to evaluation of the long term impact of our work in relation to health and wellbeing. We also need to explore with partners how the EPS can most effectively contribute to the design and implementation of long-term evaluation in respect of health and wellbeing developments across the Authority.

