



Northamptonshire County Council

Northamptonshire Educational Psychology Service

Local Offer

Northamptonshire Educational Psychology Service.... Bringing positive change and growth from the application of psychology through innovation and excellence

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Educational Psychology Services – Local Offer

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- **Educational Psychology Service**
- **Targeted Mental Health in Schools Programme (TaMHS)**
- **Education Inclusion Officer – mental health**
- **Children First Therapy Services team**

Educational Psychology Service

The provision of an educational psychology service (EPS) is a statutory function for local authorities and supports the local authority to discharge a range of its statutory responsibilities. The EPS provides a targeted and specialist service for and to children and young people experiencing barriers to their education and development, through direct work and through supporting their families and key professionals. These barriers include difficulties in: cognition and learning; physical, medical and sensory needs; communication and interaction; and behaviour, emotional and social difficulties. It supports the council's core purpose by helping those who are struggling to help themselves, particularly through specialist interventions with children, young people and families, as well as through helping people to help themselves, notably through advice and consultation.

The EPS is provided on both a commissioned and core-funded basis. The proportion of 'core to commissioned' can change on an annual basis, but is often a fairly equal split between these functions. The EPS core activities are part of the council's Local Offer. A number of priorities are identified and refreshed each year. The commissioned activities of the EPS provide a key component in early intervention & school development and training. The majority of our commissioned work is from schools; some of it is commissioned by other sections within the county council, such as children's social care or Public Health.

These core-work priorities fall within Levels 3 and 4 of the Integrated Working Procedures – targeted and specialist interventions. They are as follows:

For those going through statutory assessment for an Education, Health & Care Plan (EHCP), the council supports the EPS to provide formal reports for the initial EHCPs or statutory psychological advice for initial statements. These are requested by the EHCP team.

For Children in Care (CiC) to the county council, council services (the Virtual School; relevant social care managers) can refer for advice, consultation and interventions from educational psychologists, as well as for psychotherapeutic interventions focused on attachment and family relationship issues, usually directly to the EP Service or indirectly using a single-point-of-access, multi-agency referral panel (known as the ATLAS Panel).

This work is charged to schools at half the rate as other work, reflecting the sharing of costs between this council service and schools. The EPS welcomes requests for involvement from other sections of the local authority & from health authorities, who will need to commission this support from the EP Service.

Following a traumatic incident, the EPS provides support and advice to schools/early years settings in the immediate aftermath (such as for incidents including death or serious injury of a member of the school community – parent, pupil, staff); this support is termed ‘Critical Incident First Day Response’. Further support is on a school-commissioned basis.

Diagnostic assessments of pre-school children who may have an autistic spectrum condition are provided by the local health trust (NHFT) and can be supported by the EPS through its local authority-funded working. Schools can commission this work for children of any age, although the most usual route is for health staff to provide this work, accessed through the Referrals Management Centre.

Children under five years old, referred to the Specialist SEND Service Panel, have access to support from the EPS, working collaboratively with the council’s Early Years & Portage team. This panel receives referrals concerning children under five years old from a range of relevant professionals who have concerns about a child’s holistic developmental progress. The EPS core offer includes support to children with delayed entry to school who also meet the EY Panel’s criteria, brought to our attention by the EY Panel.

For early intervention, staff training and capacity building and preventative work, the council has retained capacity within the EPS that is available to be commissioned by schools and other providers for responses at Levels 1 and 2 of the council’s Integrated Working Procedures (universal and early intervention/emerging needs). This commissioned activity provides:

Systemic or capacity building support through training and development;

Individual assessment and intervention for children who have emergent needs, presenting with complexity and severity;

Interventions with children at the whole-class level or in pupil groups.

These interventions use a variety of evidence-based approaches appropriate to the context and assessment information.

Targeted Mental Health in Schools (TaMHS)

The TaMHS Programme is an additional priority supported by the local authority. TaMHS supports the early intervention / prevention agenda. It provides training and development to invited schools – those whose pupil populations indicate the likelihood of greatest need – in addition to direct interventions to individual and pupil groups, addressing emotional well-being / mental health (EWB/MH).

Full Engagement in the TaMHS Programme involves:

Consultation Process re: Whole School Provision – All Schools (if completed in previous year, then building on this);

Consultation with Education Inclusion Officer – Mental Health re: subsidised support to develop bespoke ‘Wellbeing Wheel(s)’ for school;

Opportunities for consultation or for co-working a case with staff from Specialist CAMHS - a Specialist Primary Mental Health Practitioner or a Specialist CAMHS Advisor;

Bespoke training by an Educational Psychologist for whole school staff training – up to 3 hours free – and/or further training by Specialist CAMHS staff (if needed);

Staff from ‘TaMHS Programme schools’ attending at least 4 subsidised, centrally-organised courses for key school staff in approaches, programmes and interventions from the Northamptonshire TaMHS Building Blocks and Key Processes Model.

Support to develop an ‘Emotional Health and Wellbeing Team’ – free for all ‘TaMHS’ secondary schools.

Education Inclusion Officer – mental health

This post provides consultation to staff within the council’s Virtual School for Looked After Children; a targeted response to those referred from the Virtual School; work within the TaMHS Programme to deliver training for adults who are central to the emotional well-being of vulnerable children/young people; as well as providing individual or group-based pupil interventions identified through the Virtual School.

Other Commissioned activities:

Educational Psychologists and therapists from its Therapy Services Team work together to provide a range of interventions. These include the provision of intensive intervention through additional and specialist support, for example:

Coaching Psychology - the application of psychology to enhance the performance, development, learning and well-being of others – useful to any adult working in various work place settings. For example, senior leadership teams taking on new responsibilities, newly qualified teachers, experienced staff and to enhance close relationships within class teams.

Developing and delivering early intervention programmes for families and their young children who have experienced domestic abuse. The EPS is working with early years staff to identify families and provide such support programmes (“Moving On Through Play”).

Delivering the Northamptonshire Baby Room Project. This is an intervention that links research into baby-brain development with the development of enhanced early years’ practice within ‘baby rooms’ in local child care settings.

Emotion Coaching interventions – supporting children and adults to recognise and understand emotions behind our responses and how to handle them; promoting a relational approach to thinking about children and young people’s behaviour.

Children First Therapy Services team (see also its own [website](#))

Therapy interventions include Theraplay, Drama Therapy, Play Therapy, Therapeutic Life Story work and Video Interaction Guidance. These are provided through the Children First Therapy Services team managed within the EPS. These therapeutic interventions address family relationships and attachment issues, working with parents/carers, their children and, when appropriate, key professionals. They focus on strengthening relationships and building bonds of attachment within family groups (rather than individual child-therapy). These approaches help build a 'working model' of stable relationships, which can be carried forward into new relationships. Access is through direct referral to the administrator (therapy@childrenfirstnorthamptonshire.co.uk) where all requests need to be supported by a commissioning arrangement.