

EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY SERVICE WORKING WITH SECONDARY SCHOOLS - 'DROP-IN SESSIONS'

Drop in sessions

All secondary schools will be offered 1 ½ hours problem solving consultation on a half-termly basis, by their link EP. The time would be used flexibly depending on current school need and negotiation between the school and EP for a range of activities; examples are provided in a 'Menu' below.

The time would not be used for EPs to work with individual children. Referrals for individual pupil work would occur via the normal referral process and will be subject to normal referral criteria as agreed for the EPS delivery model (September 2009).

What can the EP offer?

Your EP will be able to offer a range of different ways of working with you. EPs may also work jointly, depending on the nature of work requested. Please feel free to discuss what would be helpful with your EP.

- a) Planned sessions requested by the SENCo for themselves, school staff or parents (or combination). These slots would be for staff or parents to gain problem solving support from the EP around their concerns. This may relate to individual children (known to EPS or anonymous) or whole classes / groups, or around SEN procedures and support for vulnerable children.

The individual seeking support from the EP should, where possible, bring clear and focused questions which the EP can help them with. They may also need to bring along some key information e.g. information collected by the school about presenting difficulties.

Following a drop-in session it may be that the EP suggests further ideas for the staff member/parent to try out or information for them to collect and bring back to a future slot.

Examples could include:

- *A session for a teacher regarding a child already known to EPS on a named basis (e.g. evaluation of intervention put into place, support or advice re ongoing work).*
- *A session for a TA regarding a child not yet known to EPS on an anonymous basis (e.g. whether presenting difficulties meet criteria for EP involvement, supporting school through signposting to appropriate agencies, collaborative problem-solving around specific concerns)*
- *A session for an NQT regarding a whole class or group of children causing concern, e.g. behaviour management techniques.*



- *A session for the pastoral DHT / Inclusion Manager / Director of Personalised Learning regarding whole school / strategic issues, e.g. anti-bullying, behaviour management, setting up of new systems, e.g. supervision for learning mentors, peer mentoring projects etc.*
- *A session for a new SENCo on SEN procedures and support for vulnerable children – how the system works.*
- *A session for a highly anxious parent who thinks their child may have dyslexia but appears to be doing well in school.*
- *A session for a parent around SEN processes*
- *A top up planning meeting between SENCo and EP (top-up to usual planning meetings are often required by busy secondary schools).*

b) Planned workshops or INSET for small groups of staff (teachers, teaching assistants, learning mentors, lunchtime supervisors) or parents.

Sessions for staff could include using a case study approach to think about how staff can support pupils with 'ADHD', using process or group consultation or could follow a more traditional INSET approach.

How would the time be organised? What would school need to do before the EP 'Drop-in'

School should nominate a member of staff (likely the current SENCo) who can collate requests for support from individuals and groups of staff or parents and who has a clear understanding of the needs of the school. The EP can then liaise with the member of staff to negotiate and plan time.

Ideally, the EP and link teacher could discuss the termly use of time at the EP Planning Consultation meeting, but where this is not possible, the link teacher should contact the EP by email or telephone to discuss and agree the plan for the next session. Depending on the nature of the work agreed, the EP may need time to prepare materials, or gather EP files where a review consultation is planned for a particular child already known to the service.

Parental consent:

- Where school staff would like to consult about a child already known to our service, we would ask school staff, out of courtesy to let parents know that they are discussing the child with the EP.
- Where a child is not known to us, and we have no written parental consent to be involved, we can offer consultation on an anonymous basis and will record any agreed actions against the child's initials and year group.

Recording of consultations

Given the face-to-face nature of the work, we would like to keep recording to a minimum whilst meeting professional guidelines for ethical and good practice. We will use handwritten carbonated consultation records on which the EP or school staff can record key points and actions agreed. The original can then be left in the school, whilst copies can be filed in the EP pupil file (where the child is known to EPS) or the school file. A copy should also be forwarded to parents where the child is known to the EPS.

