

GETTING THE BEST FROM YOUR EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGIST (EP)

All Barnet schools receive a 90 minute meeting with an EP funded by the local authority. Additionally, schools can purchase ‘traded’ time. Head teachers and SENCos can support school staff to help them get the most from working with their EP. Everyone benefits when the time is used efficiently.

This short guide is intended to give helpful hints for experienced SENCos and guidance for those new to the role. A longer document called “*Working with the Educational Psychology Team*” is also available.

Prioritisation of work

Work is discussed and agreed at the planning meeting. The meeting is typically attended by the Headteacher, SENCo and EP and lasts for between an hour to an hour and a half. It is helpful for schools to prepare for this in advance, for example to consider how the EP can support individual children or whole school issues.

Preparation for a planning meeting can include:

- Discussion with school staff to identify and prioritise individual or groups of children for whom there are concerns about learning or emotional well-being;
- Discussion with the designated teacher (DT) for looked after children (LAC) about the needs of children living in care, special guardianship arrangements or adopted;
- Identifying any other vulnerable, at risk or under performing groups who may benefit from consultation with the EP;
- Thinking about provision, resource and intervention needs;
- Identifying whole school working opportunities identified within the school development plan, for example development of the behaviour management policy, literacy interventions, SEN, anti-bullying and other topics;
- Considering staff training needs and work with other stakeholders, for example parents/carers, midday supervisors, learning support assistants etc.

Time is limited so it is helps to be realistic about the time available and the work that can be completed. Changes happen throughout the school year, pupils move-in and there

can be changes that are hard to predict. If the planned schedule is too full or rigid it is difficult to adapt to these events.

Before EP involvement with individuals

EP work is most valuable when there is joint agreement about what the EP will do and why. Consultation and partnership with the members of staff and parents/carers who are directly involved with the child/ren is central to achieving realistic outcomes.

The school gets the most from working with the EP when they prepare for the visit in advance.

- Let your EP know what security or other visitor information may be needed to access your school and parking;
- Agree the schedule of activities in advance. These may include observation, individual assessment and home/school consultation (involving the class teacher and parent/carers where possible);
- Choose observation of lessons or activities that are relevant;
- Avoid planning time for the child to meet the EP during favourite lessons or activities;
- A child or young person can be prepared for the visit in an age appropriate way (please discuss this with your EP);
- Provide a quiet, private room that conforms to confidentiality and safeguarding protocols (e.g. with window) for meetings and individual assessment needs;
- Staff should liaise about any changes that might impact on a visit – for example absence, change of normal routine – which might mean that the work cannot be carried out effectively. There is a cancellation policy (see handbook) so let the EP know about changes with as much notice as possible.

Follow-up

It is important to have a feedback meeting attended by relevant staff and parents/carers. The purpose of the meeting is to discuss the assessment and plan next steps that fit realistically with the school. The focus will be thinking together about desirable outcomes, possible interventions. A target monitoring evaluation sheet (TME) may be helpful to

establish how much progress is made. Older pupils may be included in the meeting. It is a good idea to agree how the meeting is recorded.

Written records

If you require a written record of involvement, discuss this with your EP. Reports can vary in length and detail from a short record to a longer report. Agree the time to be taken to write the report. Written records can help evidence provision planning and monitoring. Reports should be shared with relevant and subsequent teaching staff. Staff also take their own notes from meetings.

We look forward to working collaboratively together.

Barnet Educational Psychology Team (EPT)

Checklist for preparing for EP involvement with an individual pupil

SENCo to:

Discuss with your EP before completing the request for EP involvement form about a pupil.	
Complete the request for EP involvement form with adequate detail of the concerns.	
Provide assessment data to show the pupil's progress over the last two years.	
Parents/carers are given a copy of ' <i>A guide for parents. Educational Psychologists their role and how they can help you</i> '.	
Provide recent copies of either learning support plans (LSPs), individual education plans (IEPS) or provision maps (two cycles of review).	
Provide examples of the child's independent writing, behaviour support plan (including intervention/provision) or other records relevant to the child or young person's needs. Detail the pupil's response to interventions used.	
The parent/carer gives consent after they have had an opportunity to read and contribute to the contents of the request for EP involvement form.	
Agree the date and time for parents/carers and relevant staff to meet with the EP.	
Send the request for EP involvement form to your EP at least a week in advance of the agreed date for involvement.	
School staff inform parents/carers about when any observations or assessments will happen.	