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| **Bath and North East Somerset Council****Educational Psychology Service****The Consultation Model for Children and Young People with an EHCP +** |

The Educational Psychology Service (EPS) uses a consultation model in their work with schools, early years settings, colleges and other organisations.

Consultation is a supportive approach which involves the following:

* Joint investigation and exploration
* Developing a shared understanding of the situation
* Joint planning and exploration of solutions
* Developing jointly agreed actions to improve outcomes for the child or young person
* Reviewing progress made and planning for next steps

Consultation can work at a number of levels in order to clarify concerns and identify solutions

With individuals Individuals

 With groups about groups

With the whole staff organisational issues

There is flexibility in this way of working. For example if a school raises concerns about a number of children who fight at playtime, the joint exploration of solutions could result in developing social skills in a class group or a whole school project on managing playground behaviour.

Consultation provides a structure which helps use time effectively and productively. It aims to work preventatively and creatively, rather that working reactively. It draws on the skills and expertise of those involved and takes into account the complexity of different learning environments.

**What does the educational psychologist bring to the process of Consultation?**

The educational psychologist (EP) contributes to consultation by bringing his/her experience and knowledge of child and adolescent development, the psychology of teaching and learning and organisational processes, an understanding of the psychosocial processes that interact to effect children’s development, a range of psychological assessments and techniques and solution focus techniques.

The consultation process enables the EP to share knowledge and skills and work with others as partners.

**What does Consultation involve?**

Consultation involves collaborative work amongst those people who express a concern. There are six main parts that involve the EP:

1. The Exploratory Discussion
2. The Consultation Request form is completed
3. The Consultation Meeting
4. The Consultation Record
5. The Consultation Review Meeting
6. The Consultation Review Record

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| 1. The Exploratory Discussion
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Ideally, before a consultation is considered, an exploratory discussion will take place between the link EP and the key member of staff who is involved with the child. This may be the child’s key person in an early years setting, the school’s inclusion leader or the head of pastoral care in a secondary school.

The purpose of the exploratory discussion is to clarify concerns and agree on the next course of action. This might involve the key member of staff involving another agency, implementing strategies without an EP consultation or agreement that an EP consultation will take place.

For children where explorative discussion is to take place, the school do not complete a Consultation Request form but it is expected that the school will inform the child’s parent/carer that a member of staff and the EP will be talking about the child’s needs.

Exploratory discussions can also be about a range of issues including whole school, group, processes and systems. Exploratory discussions can be carried out via the telephone or e-mail as well as face-to-face.

Please note any discussion about a pupil must have parental consent beforehand

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| 1. The Consultation Request form is completed
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Following a joint agreement of the purpose and nature of consultation, the school should fill in the Consultation Request form. On receipt of a fully completed form, including a parent/carer’s signature, the child/young person’s details will be logged on the EPS database and an individual file will be opened. The EP will negotiate with the school, an agreed time for the consultation. The EP will not be able to carry out a consultation visit without the Consultation Request form being sent to the EPS prior to the visit.

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| 1. The Consultation Meeting
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The Consultation Meeting will involve the EP meeting with the people most concerned, including parent/carers and key members of staff to develop a shared understanding of the situation, explore solutions, goals and jointly agree actions. Cover might be needed to release the child’s teacher, a teaching assistant or another key member of staff.

Prior to the meeting, based on the outcome of the exploratory discussion, the EP might observe the child/young person and/or meet with them to explore their views and abilities. This information might be useful when developing the shared understanding and jointly agreeing actions.

Jointly agreed actions will focus on how to improve outcomes for the child/young person. They should be reflected in the support plan through specific targets. The date, time and venue for the Consultation Review meeting will be agreed at the end of this meeting.

A Consultation Meeting is likely to last up to one hour. Without the parent/carers or key members of staff (e.g. teacher), the meeting is not likely to be constructive. It is essential that all key people are invited to the meeting by a member of school staff.

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| 1. The Consultation Record
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Following the Consultation Meeting, the EP will write a Consultation Record. This will be a short record outlining key points discussed in the meeting. The jointly agreed actions and review date and time will be noted.

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| 1. The Consultation Review Meeting
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The Consultation Review Meeting is likely to take place between 6 and 8 weeks after the initial Consultation Meeting. Those present at the meeting should include all those involved in the initial Consultation Meeting.

The purpose of meeting is to review progress made towards the jointly agreed actions, explore the current situation and agree further actions or next steps. This might include further EP involvement or agreement that an EP is no longer needed.

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| 1. The Consultation Review Record
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Following the Consultation Review Meeting, the EP will write a Consultation Review Record. This will be a short record outlining key points discussed in the meeting and progress made towards previously agreed targets.

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