



## Community Services: Education Educational Psychology Service



### Working remotely with the Educational Psychology Service

#### Information for schools

Alongside our colleagues in schools, and across children's services, the Educational Psychology Service (EPS) has made a robust, innovative response to new ways of working remotely during the pandemic. This short leaflet is designed to share how the EPS will continue to deliver the high standard of service expected of us, which now incorporates remote working options. This leaflet describes how remote working interacts with the 5 core functions educational psychologists (EPs) offer and with which you will be familiar: consultation; assessment; intervention; training; and research/development work. A range of platforms such as Google Meet, Skype or Microsoft Teams will facilitate our ongoing remote core service delivery as follows:

#### Consultation

Educational Psychologists (EPs) continue to undertake consultation with staff and parents online regarding school or class-level issues, as well as around individual pupils.

*Examples of remote online consultation:*

- Initial consultation meetings regarding pupils
- Child planning meetings, reviews for children who are looked after, multi-agency/support meetings

#### Assessment

In the majority of cases, where possible, assessments need to be face to face, including assessment in context and observation. This will be risk assessed according to official guidelines and considered on a case by case basis. There is, however, much we can do online:

- Contributing to ongoing autism assessments (e.g. developmental histories with parents, and screening meetings with pupils)
- Assessments of a child's developmental progress
- Assessments of a young person's mental health
- Accessing existing assessment information

#### Intervention

Using online platforms, we can continue to offer direct support, including therapeutic work, to children, young people and families where this approach is considered to be beneficial. Furthermore, we are planning to formally evaluate remote therapeutic work over the course of this school session to inform future practice. We encourage our colleagues to discuss collaboration with us regarding possible individual, class, or school interventions.

## **Training**

EPs can deliver online training sessions to educational establishments, parents and link agencies. This includes live, interactive, training sessions to large and small delegations. We are also able to record training, live or otherwise, for any staff who are unable to attend. We will look to contribute to the provision of flexible training through webinars, for example as part of the Education Service training calendar, in the near future.

## **Research and Development**

Online platforms are supportive for planning research and development work at both authority and establishment level. Recent examples include taking forward the wellbeing initiatives of the trauma and nurture strategies. A core service of the EPS within research and development work is to support schools with the implementation of new programmes and approaches, such as those arising from PEF, and, importantly, evaluating their impact. There is a great deal that can be achieved with online forums such as coaching, surveys, focus groups, strategic working groups, data collection, and analysis, and sharing.

## **Moving Forwards**

Remote working is not intended to replace the EPS visiting establishments, and there will be instances where remote working is neither appropriate nor possible. However, as a service we are excited by the opportunities remote working offers us in creating further flexibility in service access/delivery. In some situations, there is the potential for added value to all stakeholders:

## **Added Value**

Finally, we would like share what we consider to be some value added benefits of remote working that we are especially excited about:

- Significant reduction in travel time and outreach to remote communities
- New ways of reaching children and parents who are unable to be in school due to issues such as childcare, disability, anxiety/school refusal, autism/face to face engagement
- Speedy response for unexpected/urgent situations such as a critical incident
- Online support for individuals in between scheduled school visits, for example ongoing counselling sessions
- Reaching larger numbers/categories of delegates in both live and recorded webinars, offering greater flexibility

## **Further information**

For further information please contact the Principal Educational Psychologist:

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