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Welcome

Welcome to South Ayrshire Councils, Educational Psychology service's first newsletter. We've started this newsletter to share information on what's happening within the service with our partners. As this is a brand new endeavour for us, we would appreciate feedback to let us know if this is helpful, and any ways we can improve both the newsletter and our service.

One way that you can provide feedback or keep up to date with our service is by following us on twitter:

[@SouthAyrEPS](https://twitter.com/SouthAyrEPS)

On our twitter account, we share a range of information geared towards a variety of partners and service users. This information comes from our own service's activities, our fellow South Ayrshire schools, partners and organisations such as: the National Autistic Society, the Education Endowment Foundation, or other organisations that support children & young people. We also like to share fun info! Now more than ever it's key that we are able to stay connected.

Just for fun: Are these psychology facts True or False?

1. Good relationships are more important to a long life than exercise.
2. 68% of people suffer from phantom vibration syndrome, sensing one's phone is buzzing when it is not.
3. Pessimistic beliefs about the future can protect from physical or mental illness
4. People who watch TV crime shows regularly overestimate the amount of crime in the real world
5. Opposites attract – you're likely to be attracted to someone who looks and thinks different.
6. You cannot truly multitask.
7. Eyewitness testimonies are always reliable and accurate
8. SENTENCES MADE ONLY OF CAPITAL LETTERS ARE HARDER TO READ
9. Your mind wanders between 30 and 70% of the time



Care-Experienced Project

A priority for the service is to improve outcomes for our care experienced children and young people. One area of work within this area, that the service is leading on, aims to ensure care experienced learners within the Belmont cluster experience a smooth, effective and positive transition from primary to secondary school.

The service has worked closely with the cluster schools to undertake a wide range of self-evaluation activities to identify strengths and areas for improvement.

This has involved analysing pupil data, undertaking a literature review to identify evidenced based practice, involving head teachers in a thematic analysis utilising the transitions quality indicator, gathering the views of school staff as well as consulting with care experienced learners with the cluster. The next step in this project is to develop an action plan for improvement based on the rich evaluative information gathered.

The work of the project will be shared with all schools in South Ayrshire and will inform the department's transition guidelines for care experienced children and young people. For further information on this work, please contact Gavin Stalker, Depute Principal

psychologist.

Nurture Network

Roseanna Mohammed, educational psychologist, and Ainsley McLarty, trainee educational psychologist, are currently supporting the nurture network project. This is carried out in collaboration with the staff from Chestnut Cottage (SAC's intensive nurture provision) to upskill and support colleagues from across South Ayrshire who are running nurture groups.

The next nurture network meetings were planned based on participants' perceived needs – one session had aimed to involve colleagues from authority secondary schools in a solution oriented discussion to understand good practice and challenging areas.

For primary colleagues, it was anticipated that they would benefit from support from Chestnut Cottage staff and a tour of a well-established, traditional nurture provision.

Next steps of this project are dependent on the circumstances on returning to school as normal post COVID-19, but it is hoped that EPS would continue to provide at least termly input while supporting ongoing evaluation.

Service Contact Info

Follow us on twitter: @SouthAyrEPS

Help us get to 1,000 followers

check out our website:

<https://www.eps.south-ayrshire.gov.uk/>

For further information. You can email us at

psychologicalservices.admin@south-ayrshire.gov.uk

or call us on 01292 612 819

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Compassionate, Connected Classroom/Community

The Compassionate, Connected Classroom and Community is an endeavour created by Education Scotland, with the aim of supporting children in upper primary stages. It hopes to upskill and empower teaching and support staff working with this population to support the mental health and wellbeing of their pupils. In particular, it takes a trauma-informed, nurturing perspective which acknowledges the impact of adverse childhood experiences. Roseanna Mohammed and Debbie Brown, have been carrying out training sessions with individuals from across South Ayrshire in this approach, so that they may embed it in their respective schools.

Within the compassionate and connected classrooms project in South Ayrshire, EPS has been encouraging staff to undertake practitioner enquiry. This is still at an early stage, but it is hoped that this will follow the steps of collaborative action enquiry, and that it may contribute to the resources of the national improvement hub.

Support sessions around CCC and practitioner enquiry will continue to be hosted by EPS throughout the remainder of this academic year, with the hope that staff will have the opportunity to implement and evaluate their first intervention in this model. The next meeting of CCC was to take place in May 2020, and will reconvene when Scottish schools re-open.

Attainment Challenge

South Ayrshire has three primary and one secondary school receiving attainment challenge funding through the Schools Programme. South Ayrshire's EPS continues to be involved in the attainment challenge through research support, guidance, and attendance at steering group meetings. Carole Campbell and Clara Davidson are the team members currently involved with this project.

The Transition Project, the current endeavour of South Ayrshire's arm of the Scottish attainment challenge, prepares to wrap up with its first P7 to S1 cohort, and to commence with our new cohort of current P7s (who will move to S1 in August 2020). This project aims to improve outcomes around the transition for our most vulnerable young people, preventing the attainment gap and dip in attainment outcomes in literacy, numeracy, and health and wellbeing that often occur around the transition.

Analysis of data collected from the current S1 attainment challenge cohort, who received a series of improved transition policies, practices and procedures, indicates a prevention of the aforementioned dip in attainment in numeracy, health and wellbeing, and reading.

Furthermore, qualitative data collected from pupils, parents, and staff around the transition indicated that the changes to the transition process caused parents and pupils to feel more confident. Children and young people indicated that they felt more comfortable upon entering secondary school – an outcome that was also triangulated in conversations with relevant staff

Practitioner Enquiry

Throughout the 2019-2020 academic year Gavin Stalker and Clara Davidson, delivered ongoing professional learning and coaching to all teachers within the QMA cluster primary schools to support the implementation of practitioner enquiry to improve the experiences and outcomes for learners.

Nearly all teachers report being knowledgeable, skilled, motivated and confident to effectively engage with the practitioner enquiry process. This included analysing data, assessing holistic needs and engaging with research and professional dialogue to identify evidenced based practices. The staff worked well at designing research questions and interventions alongside identifying effective evaluation methodologies to measure the impact on learners. Practitioners have made excellent progress in the delivery of practitioner enquiry and the Educational Psychology Service will continue to provide support in the new academic year to further embed this cluster improvement priority.



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Mental Health Strategy Group

The Psychological Service continues to make a significant contribution to the Council's Mental Health Strategy Group. The Mental Health Strategy Group is a multi-disciplinary forum that plan for & evaluate the development of services and resources to support young people's mental health and well being. We are currently in the process of reviewing and adapting the current plan with partners. Recent guidance from the Scottish Government is likely to significantly influence the development of the plan. We will be looking to support an audit of existing mental health supports from ages 5-24 as well as undertaking a needs analysis to identify any gaps in provision. We look forward to working closely with our partners in Education, Health, Children's Services, CLD, the third sector, the youth forum and hopefully the parent council on this.



Letter from the PEP

Welcome to our first Psychological Services newsletter. We aim to send you a newsletter twice a year to keep you up to date with what is happening within the service and provide you with a summary of some of the work we are undertaking.

I think we can all agree that this term has not gone to plan. All Psychologists are currently working from home but are still available for consultation. Please continue to email and call with your questions and queries. In response to the COVID 19 outbreak we have updated our website with advice and sign posting of supports for children & young people, young people experiencing ASN and parents. Please have a look at www.eps.south-ayrshire.gov.uk and direct parents to the website. On the website there is also a wealth of information about the service including leaflets for young people, parents, school staff & other professionals outlining the role of an Educational Psychologists. We are currently seeking to support parents and carers further through a telephone support service. Our helpline launches on April 21st, and more information regarding this can be seen on page 6 of this newsletter.

We have recently welcomed Ainsley McLarty and Niamh Bulfin to our team, one day per week, as Psychology Assistants. Ainsley is currently on placement as South Ayrshire's first year trainee and we have recently had confirmation that both Ainsley and Niamh will be undertaking their second year training placement within South Ayrshire Educational Psychology Service. We are delighted to welcome both Ainsley & Niamh to the service and we look forward to supporting them both next year in their second year as a trainee.

We have recently welcomed back Debbie Brown, from maternity leave after the birth of her beautiful daughter Hali. Debbie will resume her previous allocation within the Prestwick cluster. Jennifer Wright will be returning to the service in the summer term, from maternity leave, after the birth of her gorgeous son James. She will resume responsibility for the Belmont cluster.

As always if you have any questions, queries, comments or feedback please do not hesitate in getting in touch with me.

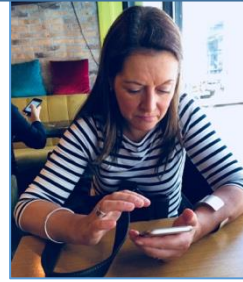
Regards,

Carole

Principal Educational Psychologist



Carole Campbell
Principal Educational
Psychologist



Yvonne Coy
Educational
Psychologist

Gavin Stalker
Depute Principal Educational Psychologist



Debbie Brown
Educational Psychologist



**Jennifer
Wright**



Stephanie McNicol
Senior Educational
Psychologist



Educational Psychologist

Claire Masterman
Educational Psychologist



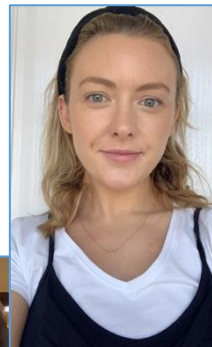
Ainsley McLarty
Trainee Educational
Psychologist/Assistant
Psychologist



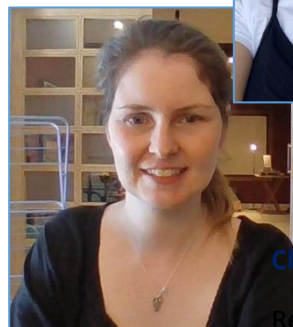
Niamh Bulfin
Assistant
Psychologist



Roseanna Mohammed
Educational Psychologist



Diann Neill
Educational Psychologist



Clara Davidson
Research Assistant



Coping with Coronavirus

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Educational Psychology Parent Helpline

From Monday the 20th of April we'll be offering a helpline for Parents and Carers who may be looking for support around their young persons well being during the Covid 19 pandemic.

As education colleagues, you can refer parents who you think may benefit from this support by contacting your head teacher or a member of the pastoral team.

To make a referral, contact eps@south-ayrshire.gov.uk

This helpline can be accessed by **all** South Ayrshire families. We will provide a listening ear as well as advice and support.

We hope this service will be helpful to parents who are struggling during this difficult time.

