



**Educational Psychology Service**

To the Head Teacher and SENCo for each  
School/Unit

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Please ask for: Clare Hetherington

Date: 30.08.22

Dear Colleagues

I am writing to update you on the PCC Educational Psychology Service and Advisory Teams in schools for the coming year.

We have experienced a number of changes this year. Three Educational Psychologists (EPs) have moved out of the city whilst we welcome two new ones this academic year, as well as a new trainee. We have tried to minimise change of allocated EPs to schools but some of you will have a new link EP. We also have vacancies within the communication and interaction team which are being addressed.

Where there is a change of EP or CIT worker for a school, we are working hard to ensure a smooth professional handover. We aim to make the transition as seamless as possible and all staff will be in touch with their schools at the beginning of term to start planning. The Educational Psychology Service is working very closely with members of our Communication and Interaction Team (CIT) and Plymouth Advisory Team for Sensory Support (PATSS) as part of a multi-agency service.

You will know that in line with national trends we are experiencing a high volume of statutory assessments. Requests have continued to rise right up until the end of term and have continued during August. As a result, we need to prioritise, together with you, the pieces of work that the revenue funded PCC EP Service will undertake in order to ensure that statutory duties supporting children's needs are met, whilst at the same time advising on vulnerable groups by providing consultation at an early stage.

The EP team will need to continue to focus on delivery in these main areas:

- Termly planning, consultation and triage meetings (six sessions per year – a session is three hours)
- Completions of statutory assessments agreed by the single multi agency panel (SMAP) or as a result of the SEND Tribunal
- Complex specialist SEND casework, where there is placement breakdown.
- Critical Incident response
- Staff/school development work related to the priority areas of social emotional mental health and exceptional cohorts.

The Communication and Interaction Team will advise and undertake interventions for SEN Support at a targeted level and in some cases at a specialist level of the Graduated Approach to Inclusion. This will be aligned with the work of the school link EP.

Our revenue funded offer will include the six termly planning consultation and triage sessions per school. These will enable us to arrange pieces of work according to the above priorities across the city, (see attached guidance). During term one it is likely that all psychologists will be involved in completing statutory assessments that have been initiated in July and August, where children have not previously been referred to our Service and where assessments could not be undertaken during the school holidays.

We have allocated staff to clusters of schools organised by MAT so that as far as possible we can support communities of practice and ensure a consistent approach according to MAT needs and priorities. We will review this with you at Head Teacher meetings, SENCO briefings and school based meetings. This PCC revenue funded EP and multi-agency work is free of charge to schools and delivered according to priorities identified across the city.

Traded work provided by the PCC EP Service, which is separate and funded directly by schools, will enable the EPs to continue to offer extended work at SEN Support as part of a wider graduated approach. The SEND Advisory Teams (communication and interaction, and sensory support), Early Years Inclusion Support Workers, SEND Occupational Therapists, Children's Disability Social Workers and EWOs will continue to link closely with the EP Service to integrate advice and interventions as part of the multi-agency Local Authority offer.

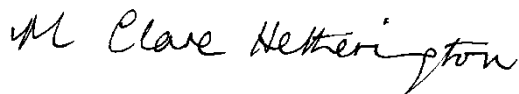
As always, we welcome the opportunity to discuss with you, and/or members of your Senior Leadership Team, in order to answer questions, consider suggestions and jointly plan how we can move forward together meeting priority needs. Further information about the EP Service and resources and the CIT can be found through the SEND Local Offer at:

<https://www.plymouthonlinedirectory.com/plymouthlocaloffer/educationalpsychologyservice>

<https://www.plymouthonlinedirectory.com/plymouthlocaloffer/communicationinteractionteam>

Please get in touch if you have any queries.

Yours sincerely



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