

From mountain to sea

Information for Early Learning and Child Care Setting

Educational Psychology Service

Using psychology to help improve wellbeing and learning for all children and young people to develop the skills, confidence and resilience to flourish throughout life.



What is an Educational Psychologist?

The Educational Psychology Service is part of the Inclusion, Equity & Wellbeing Team within Education and Children's Services. Every school has a named Educational Psychologist who works in collaboration with school staff, parents and other professionals to help children and young people achieve their full potential. Where appropriate children and young people are also involved in this process. The Educational Psychologist for Early Learning and Childcare Providers is decided by considering the child's home address and which school they are zoned to attend when they enrol for Primary 1. Further information about how Educational Psychologists work in Aberdeenshire is available on our website:

[Schools and other agencies](https://www.glowscotland.org.uk) | ([glowscotland.org.uk](https://www.glowscotland.org.uk)).



What will the Educational Psychologist do?

Educational Psychologists in Aberdeenshire follow a Consultation model of service delivery. This means that most work with children, families and early learning and childcare settings is undertaken through consultation with the people who know the child, family or setting best.

Consultation is the process and Educational Psychologist uses to assess a child's needs and support the planning of how to meet these needs in education.

There are 3 main parts to the consultation model of service delivery.
These are:

PROFESSIONAL CONSULTATION -

- When an early years practitioner (or other professional) has a problem solving discussion with the Educational Psychologist.
- Together, the Educational Psychology and Early Years team will identify strategies and solutions that can be used in the setting.
- This will usually be around a learning or well-being concern, perhaps about an individual child or group of children. Any actions for the professional can be implemented to see if there is any impact or change.
- The aim of this process is to support to the professional rather than directly to the child, and therefore a casefile is not opened and no information about the child is stored by the Educational Psychology Service.
- This discussion may be enough to support the situation to move on, and therefore be the end of the involvement of the Educational Psychologist.
- In some situations, it might be agreed that a more in-depth exploration of concerns is required, and therefore a Formal Consultation will be scheduled (see below). If this is the case, the Educational Psychologist will request an Information for Formal Consultation form or a GIRFEC request for service is completed, with parental permission.

FORMAL CONSULTATION -

- This discussion is collaborative, and is facilitated and recorded by the Educational Psychologist.
- Consultation is our principal tool for assessment and intervention and the aim of this consultation is to create a shared understanding of the child's strengths, additional support needs, and ways to help meet those needs.
- At the end of the consultation a record of agreed aims and corresponding actions is generated by everyone in attendance.

FORMAL CONSULTATION FOLLOW UP –

- This consultation usually takes place between 6 weeks and 3 months after the Formal Consultation.
- The purpose is to review and evaluate the aims and actions agreed during the Formal Consultation and consider the progress made since.
- At the Formal Consultation Follow-Up, discussion will also take place about next steps.
- This may be the end of Educational Psychology Service involvement, or it may be agreed that the Educational Psychologist will complete further assessment and / or participate in future single or multi-agency Child's Planning meetings.

Why Consultation?

- Consultation is process of collaborative assessment of a child's learning and well-being needs. Educational Psychologists use psychology to facilitate the process with those who work with the child.
- Through Consultation a shared understanding of a child's needs is generated and an intervention plan is produced.
- Consultation enables joint ownership and builds capacity in others as the outcomes and intervention are jointly created and agreed.
- Consultation is the least intrusive approach to assessment. More intrusive forms of assessment/intervention such as observation or direct work are only used when the information cannot be obtained from those who know the child best. Any direct assessment will be agreed as part of the Consultation and outcomes of direct assessment will be fed back into the process.

Other forms of assessment

- On occasion it may be necessary for the Educational psychologist to gather some additional assessment information through direct contact with the child.
- The purpose and methodology of this would be discussed and agreed at the Formal Consultation or Child's Planning meeting.
- Examples of this are observation of the child in the ELCC or play-based assessments.
- Reflections from this assessment will be fed back into the Follow Up Consultation or future Child's Planning meetings.

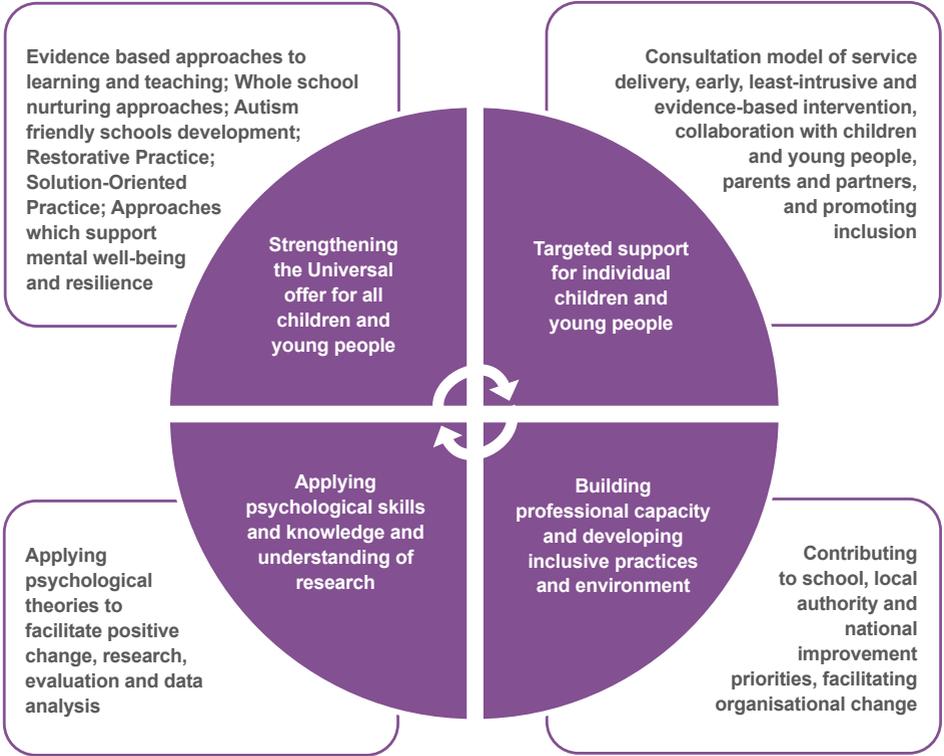
What about Child's Planning meetings?

In addition to Consultation, the Educational Psychologist may be asked to become involved in the multi-agency Child's Planning meeting often this will be a Formal Consultation, although may differ on a case by case bases. The agency making the request would contact the service for an Informal Consultation. This request often comes directly from the Named Person (Health Visitors for under 5-year-olds) however it may also be generated by another professional involved in planning for the child (e.g. Social Worker). If formal involvement is agreed by the Educational Psychologist a GIRFEC Request for Service is usually completed by the requesting agency. As Consultation is the basis of Educational Psychology Service assessment a Formal Consultation will usually arranged. However it may be that the Educational Psychologist agrees to participate in these meetings prior to Formal Consultation taking place, but an expectation would be that the Educational Psychologist would have gathered some initial assessment information as per GIRFEC guidance.

Other Educational Psychology Service support

- The Educational Psychology Service can support with professional learning and development. The Educational Psychology Service has a range of resources and materials relevant to the early years- this is delivered in conjunction with the central Early Years team and local schools/clusters.

What do Educational Psychologists do that makes a difference?



This leaflet is available in a variety of formats on request.

If you need to find out more you can phone, write

or email the service or look at our website:

<https://blogs.glowscotland.org.uk/as/aberdeenshireeps/>

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getting
it right
for every child