

ORKNEY
ISLANDS COUNCIL

Educational Psychology Service

Service Evaluation

September 2016

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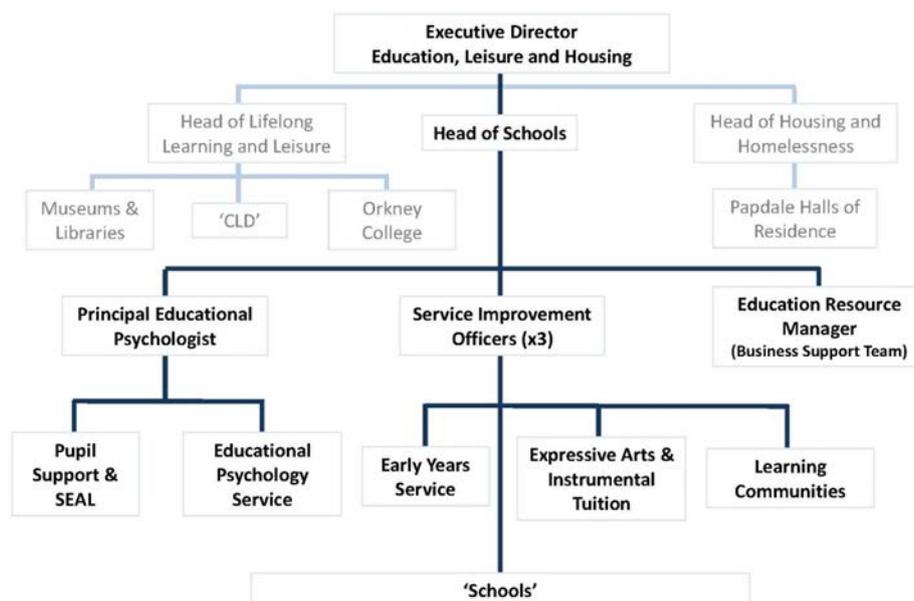
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Section 1

Educational Psychology Service Profile

Orkney Islands Council's Educational Psychology Service (EPS) is part of Education, Leisure and Housing and is aligned with the Pupil Support service, both of which are managed by the Principal Educational Psychologist (P.E.P.). The P.E.P. reports through the Head of Schools to the Executive Director as illustrated in the organogram below:



The EPS consists of 2 FTE including the PEP. The Senior EP and main-grade EP share 1 FTE post. The Senior EP is retiring in September 2016.

The EPS provides a service to all children and families in Orkney predominantly by allocating time to the 2 senior secondary schools, 4 island junior high schools, 16 primary schools and 2 partner pre-school providers through a named link psychologist. Requests for involvement come not only from schools but also from parents and young people directly and from our partner agencies.

A number of issues arise within a remote authority made up from a number of small islands as well as the larger 'mainland' island. These issues require continual reflection on modes of service delivery as outlined below:

- There is a need for flexibility and creative solutions in schools with small numbers of pupils but high levels of need.
- Specialist services for Orkney's children and families, e.g. clinical psychology, child and adolescent psychiatry and paediatric specialists are based on mainland Scotland, chiefly Aberdeen. This requires local services to work closely and creatively together to assess and meet needs.
- Building staff confidence and skills in an ongoing way is an essential part of the EPS work due to the factors mentioned above.

Section 2

Background to Where we are Now

The work of the EPS embraces all areas of the education service and engages with partners to promote developments and projects to support local priorities. The EP Service Plan links directly to education service planning and also supports elements of the Integrated Children's Service Plan.

In the autumn of 2009 the psychological service was inspected by HMIE. The HMIE team identified the following key strengths and areas for development.

The service had:

- Provided strong leadership to ensure the successful delivery of GIRFEC and the integrated assessment framework in Orkney Islands Council.
- Developed a wide range of very effective interventions to address the needs of the most vulnerable children and young people.
- Built capacity in others through strong partnership working.
- Developed a clear philosophy underpinning all aspects of service delivery that was evident in practice.

The service should:

- Develop a research strategy that will support the delivery of service and authority objectives.
- Collect and collate management information to further demonstrate improvements in performance and trends over time.

Following the Inspection Report, the service sought to maintain its key strengths and address areas for improvement through seeking to become increasingly embedded in the strategic work of the Education Service. Section 5 of this report illustrates the range of strategic groups the EPS is now taking a lead in or making significant contributions to.

Our research and evaluation function has been further developed and utilised more regularly by our stakeholders and we have begun to look at performance information as described in section 5 and impact with our education partners and would like to use the VSE process to examine these areas more closely.

Section 3

Visions, Values and Aims

How far have we come to realise these?

Orkney's School Service Plan 2014-2016 has the following vision statement:

"The School Service in Orkney is committed to working together with the wider community so that Orkney is a place where, as children and young people grow up, they get the right place at the right time in the right way in order to ensure that they can be all the can be (and, indeed, maybe more)."

The Service Action Plan outlined expectations of the EP service which focus on "ensuring our systems support changes in practice and culture so that children and young people get the right place at the right time in the right way."

The EP Service Plan August 2014 – August 2016 has embraced these expectations and broken them down into goals which support and drive forward local objectives in support of the national drive to close the attainment gap by:

- Strengthening links with other agencies.
- Ensuring successful transitions for all pupils.
- Developing capacity in Orkney to meet all learning needs of children and young people.
- Maximising impact and efficiency of the EPS.
- Supporting self-evaluation in schools and services through Appreciative Inquiry to promote reflection and planning for improvement.

What have we achieved?

During 2014 – 2016, the EPS has worked to achieve the goals and deliver the outcomes below which link directly to the School Service Plan and supports the Integrated Children's Services Plan.

The Service Plan has been evaluated by the team on an ongoing basis and progress is charted as shown below:

Progress Key:

1.	Completed or on target.
2.	Some progress made.
3.	Early stage of development.

A. Partnership.

Goals.	Outcomes.	Progress.
Strengthen links with other agencies.	1. Embed 'Getting It Right' principles and procedures across the Authority: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clarification of roles of Lead Professional and Named Person. • Clearly defined lines of communication for integrated assessment and planning. • Standardised process and formats for review and planning (Child's Plan). • Professionals aware of and able to use new local GIR Guidance. 	1.
	2. The Support Manual is used by a wide range of users (public and professional).	2.
	3. Thorough and objective multi-agency process in place for identification of ASD across the authority.	1.
	Robust review process in place for children with ASD.	3.

B. Innovation and Development.

Goals.	Outcomes.	Progress.
Ensure successful transitions for all pupils.	1. Needs of all vulnerable children at Pre-school, Secondary and 16+ transitions are understood, and targeted intervention planned and reviewed.	1.
	2. Overarching protocols in place regarding transitions at all stages, including from home to the hostel.	
Develop capacity in Orkney to meet all learning needs of Children and Young People.	1. Parents and professionals access high quality local training on ASD management and interventions.	2.
	2. Identified training needs fed into planning forum for authority's CPD.	1.
	3. Conceptual links made between various training inputs and authority initiatives.	2.
	4. EPS seen as the 'go to' service when new training and other initiatives are planned to ensure consistency/compatibility.	3.
	5. Practitioners feel confident to address literacy needs.*	1.
	6. Practitioners feel confident to address emotional health and wellbeing needs	1.

* EPS actions completed but low impact on teacher confidence.

C. Resource Management (Service Delivery).

Goals.	Outcomes.	Progress.
Maximise impact and efficiency of EPS.	1. Schools feel supported and challenged by EPs through a Solution Oriented, consultative approach.	1.
	2. School SMTs understand the role of the EP.	1.
	3. EP time is spent on activities that add value and enhance capacity to meet learner needs.	1.
	4. There is a balance between universal service provision and responsiveness to exceptional, unforeseen, short-term needs.	2.

D. Performance Management (Self-Evaluation).

Goals.	Outcomes.	Progress.
Support self-evaluation in schools and services through Appreciative Inquiry to promote reflection and planning for improvement.	1. For the EPS to know where we are having an impact.	3.
	2. Take up of AI sessions across a wide range of services and schools on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting learner needs. • Values/ethos. • Health and wellbeing (including staff). 	2.
	3. Service plans continue to reflect wider authority objectives (CCP). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-evaluation cycle feeds into planning cycle so one influences the other. 	3.

Achievements related to ‘Learning and Teaching’ and ‘Partnership Working’

In preparation for the VSE process, the EP team has reflected on EPS work around the key themes of ‘Learning and Teaching’ and ‘Partnership Working’, this has highlighted evidence of impact through attaining a range of outcomes related to these themes.

Key Outcomes Achieved.

- Played a pivotal role in robust identification, planning and provision for children with autism.
- Promoted an outcomes framework across a range of agencies for Child’s Plans meetings which are strengths-based and solution-focused allowing a focus on learning and teaching targets which ensures duties in relation to the learning needs of looked after children are well met.
- Responded to Education and Care staff requests for CPD in meeting the needs of children with attention difficulties and children with attachment issues.
- Promoted wellbeing and resilience through project and development work with Education and Care staff, children and young people.
- Supported the authority in implementing key aspects of Getting it Right for Every Child and the Early Years Collaborative.

The separate document entitled ‘Self-Evaluation of National Themes’ describes these outcomes and evidence of their impact in detail.

Challenges / Implications for Practice.

Recent reflection on the Service Plan goals and on the full spread of work around the key themes of ‘Learning and Teaching’ and ‘Partnership Working’ has highlighted that progress towards particular strategic goals which involve collaboration with partners in Education has been limited.

Next Steps.

- An Appreciative Inquiry has been held with Education Department colleagues to look at the difference made through collaborative working with the EP team. As a result of this, “embedding collaborative working, reflecting and planning” will now become an ongoing agenda item for scheduled Education and Leisure Team meetings. This agenda item will be led by the EPS.
- More frequent, rigorous review of Service Plan objectives are now planned.

Section 4

Our Approach to Self-Evaluation

What does it tell us and what needs to happen?

The approach to self-evaluation taken generally by the Orkney EPS has moved away from an over-reliance on one-off surveys towards an implementation science approach. Key to this is building in time for collegiate discussion and reflection on practice. This currently happens through:

- Annual review and planning meetings with schools and selected partner agencies. These meetings focus on how our work has impacted on key national and local priorities as well as individual stakeholder needs.
- Team meetings and supervision sessions allow time for reflective case discussions.
- Our recording and planning formats for consultation, individual case work and school visits highlight that a reflective approach underpins case and systemic work.
- At planned times, team meetings report on progress towards goals within the Service Plan as part of a plan-do-review-act cycle.

Recent Evaluation of Stakeholder Feedback on Service Delivery.

In preparation for our VSE process, feedback on specific aspects of service delivery and impact has been sought from schools through questionnaires. A collation of responses forms Appendix 1 (page 20).

The feedback tells us that:

- The EPS input to schools is valued and is seen as having a positive impact on pupils and staff.
- Schools feel it is helpful to have a named link psychologist and feel that the relationships built up over time with one person is valuable.
- Generally the EP team is seen as easily accessible and quick to respond.

Challenges / Implications for Practice.

- Within this recent questionnaire feedback are useful suggestions for continuing improvement. These will be explored and considered, bearing in mind the capacity of a service comprising one full-time and two part-time members.
- With reference to the above bullet point, although there are statements in Appendix 1 requesting increased and more timely responses around individual

case work, there is also an acknowledgement of the usefulness of more systemic work:

- “Continue to focus on the wider picture such as supporting projects that make a difference to children.”
- “Continue to work more on whole school improvement.”

Moving further towards service delivery indicated in the above statements may ease capacity difficulties as well as have increased impact.

Appendix 2 (page 29) is a collation of partner agency feedback in February following the first Practice Information Exchange Forum set up by the EPS (see Section 5, page 11 – Challenges / Implications for Practice). Further feedback has been added in recent weeks after an additional questionnaire was distributed.

The feedback conveys that:

- The service is valued by our partner agencies.
- EP input is seen to be making a valuable contribution to the work of others, particularly in relation to specific vulnerable groups and complex needs.
- The EPS makes a valuable contribution to the implementation of the processes of Getting it Right for Every Child.
- EP role in “teams around the child” may still not be well understood by all stakeholders.
- Certain diagnostic processes may not be fully understood.

Next Steps.

- Discussion of stakeholder feedback in team meetings, including how to address particular concerns, e.g. use of shadowing to address suggested inconsistency in practice.
- Continued exploration of forums/systems through which to clarify particular roles and responsibilities.
- Continued promotion of diagnostic assessment procedures and Getting it Right processes.
- Revisit the use of Review of Involvement and Reflection on Practice forms.
- More rigorous focus on impact in reflective discussion of case and systemic work.
- Self-evaluation needs to feed more systematically into service improvement planning.

Evaluations of Specific Impact of Development Work.

Between 2014 and 2016 there has been effective evaluation using participant feedback of the impact of bespoke development work in schools on health and wellbeing (see separate document ‘Self-Evaluation of National Themes’).

There has also been evaluation of development groups set up to respond to themes and requests arising from reviews and consultations with schools and other partners (see section 5, page 11).

These evaluations have given us evidence of impact in this area which will be used during the VSE process to evaluate our capacity for further improvement and greater impact.

Section 5

How well do we meet the Needs of our Stakeholders?

Delivery of Key Processes

Consultation, assessment and intervention:

- The service has sustained a regular visiting pattern to all schools and early education establishments.
- Multi-agency and single-agency assessments following Getting it Right principles are undertaken by EPs with the EP being a key contributor to the process. In collaboration with social work partners, the EPS created Child's Plan formats which ensure assessment information is utilised in a solution focused way in a plan-do-review cycle.
- The use of collaborative meetings as a starting point for EP involvement is well established and understood across schools. This ensures there is a rationale where more detailed assessment is needed.
- Educational Psychology has ensured a consistent assessment process for the identification of autism and takes an active role in this process and in the planning of support.
- The service has supported individual education and care packages utilising community resources for 4 young people with complex autism.

Challenges / Implications for Practice:

During July and August 2016, the EPS became aware that there was confusion amongst health and social work partners when a cluster of requests for psychometric assessments and 'psychology reports' were received.

The EPS responded by setting up a Practice Information Exchange Forum to provide opportunities to raise awareness of the EP consultative model of service delivery and the EP approach to assessment, recording and planning within Getting it Right and the single planning approach.

What still needs to happen?

- Ongoing systematic sharing of our assessment policy/perspective with a full range of stakeholders to minimise confusion amongst health and social work partners about the role of EP assessment.
- Further development of consistency of practice with regard to assessment and written feedback.
- Use of the Practice Exchange Forum to embed collaborative and integrated assessment.

Training, Evaluation and Research

Training:

The EPS delivers a wide range of staff development to increase staff skills and confidence and build capacity in the needs of children and young people.

Development and training sessions over the last 12 months have promoted authority

priorities and have included needs-led/bespoke training with schools and a range of other partners in the following areas:

- Contribution to Child Protection Training level 2.
- Literacy Assessment and Intervention.
- Getting it Right for Every Child.
- Working with children with additional support needs –
 - Probationer Teacher Training;
 - Support for Learning Assistance Training.
- Coping with Challenge and Change.
- Attachment theory – Wellbeing and learning of looked after children.
- Autism awareness.
- Autism and the Low Arousal Approach.
- Cognitive Behavioural Therapy approaches in school.
- Solution-oriented working.
- Leading solution-oriented meetings.
- Organisations skills and the role of mind mapping.
- Thoughts, feelings and mindfulness.
- Growth Mindset and Person Centred Coaching.
- Nurture approaches.
- Restorative approaches.
- Meeting the needs of children with attention difficulties.

Qualitative and Quantitative Evidence of Impact.

All training is evaluated on completion of the course. Evaluation of training has a focus on impact. Core questions in evaluation templates ask about change in practice resulting from training input.

Qualitative data on training input presents a positive picture regarding the quality of the information presented, the usefulness of the input and how it has led to reflection on practice.

Themes and Notable Comments within Evaluation of Training:

1. CPD on stress – ‘Coping with Challenge and Change’.

- People liked and enjoyed the training at the time and found it relevant.
- People wanted it to be run again for all staff in subsequent years.
- People raised questions of staff supporting each other (e.g. staff facilitators for SO discussions with colleagues).
- Staff discussed how HWB curriculum could be delivered to pupils – i.e. using outside professionals, combination of Guidance and SfL, or by all teachers across subjects.
- Several people wrote about the positive impact it had on them personally given the work-related stress they had experienced.
- All staff were using at least some of the ideas with classes one month later.
- All staff shared their individual plans for next steps.
- Staff shared information about the resources they were using.

“I have been more aware of my own wellbeing so I can stay calm when dealing with others.”

“I have been practicing mindfulness in my own time and feel it has helped me rationalise different things in my life.”

“I am trying breathing strategies with two individuals but am looking to expand to the whole class.”

2. Pupil feedback on PSE programmes at Stromness Academy.

- Liked having choices (which programme to take, whether or not to attend) otherwise some felt resentful of time ‘taken’ from study time.
- Generally 5th and 6th year pupils felt the content was valuable, but many said it should have come sooner or was more applicable to younger pupils.

3. Staff feedback on the PSE programme delivered jointly.

- Would have worked better if staff had been involved in design of content (particularly interactive activities).
- Would have worked better if there had been more preparation for pupils, and preparation for staff delivering the programme.

Development sessions on attachment set up in collaboration with the Social Work department’s Fostering and Adoption Team and Education staff twilight development sessions on attention and focus have been a degree more quantitatively evaluated recently in order to inform the future direction of these two development groups and examine how sustained development work through interest groups could shift perceptions and beliefs.

Staff Support Group (Attachment).

Of the 13 practitioner respondents:

- All 11 teachers felt the Attachment Group had helped them improve their practice.
- 7 felt their familiarity with the theory of attachment had increased.
- 6 felt their understanding of how early experiences can impact on later learning had increased.
- 6 felt their understanding of how early relationship experiences impact on a child’s ability to regulate their emotions had increased.
- 7 felt their understanding of how relationship experiences affect brain development had increased.
- 9 felt their knowledge had increased of what behaviours might be linked with attachment difficulties, and what these behaviours might tell them about how a child understands the world.
- 9 felt they were more confident in what they could do to help children in their class with attachment issues.
- 12 felt their understanding of the procedures leading to children becoming ‘Looked After’ had increased.

- 9 felt their understanding of the procedures underlying fostering and adoption had increased.
- 9 had increased their belief that children can recover from poor early attachment if they receive the right care.
- 5 had increased their belief that insecure attachment could be compensated for by a nurturing school environment.
- 5 were more confident that the other children in their class understood the differentiation required to ensure inclusion of children who showed signs of attachment difficulties.
- 4 were more confident that the children with attachment difficulties in their class had firm friendships and were flourishing socially.
- 5 agreed more strongly that the children with attachment difficulties in their class were meeting their academic potential.

Sample practitioner statements:

- 'I have more empathy and have changed how I behave to allow the child/children to make academic and social progress.'
- 'I feel this has been very useful, relevant and comprehensive, and has given me valuable references for future practice.'
- 'This group has been worthwhile, interesting, and conducted with warmth and professionalism.'
- 'Great idea and really helpful group.'

Of the 5 collaborative organiser members (EPS/SW):

- All 5 felt that their two Services were more able to discuss their principles and core values as a result of this work.

Sample comments from Fostering and Adoption Team members:

- 'Good to have question and answer session and hear issues schools are facing.'
- 'Improves communication between services.'
- 'Greater understanding of Ed Psych Service.'

Sample comments from Educational Psychology Service:

- 'We are more able to discuss and also to be less threatened by areas where we do not quite agree.'

Staff Support Group (Focus and Attention):

- 4 twilight sessions (1 hour 30 minutes).
- Self-selecting group of teachers following an open invitation via head teachers.
- 11 attenders at first session have dropped to a regular core of 4.
- Some expert inputs (e.g. session led by paediatric OTs).
- Use of 'Solution Circles' to promote positive, solution-oriented small group discussion.

- Baseline and needs analysis done, but final session still to take place. However, verbal feedback from attendees has suggested that the ideas generated by the group are proving very helpful.

Email message from Head Teacher:

'I just thought I'd let you know that the idea the group came up with to support our pupil who finds PE difficult has worked a treat. He really enjoys the responsibility of helping the teacher set up and having a chance to see what's going to be happening before the lesson begins.'

Evaluation and Research.

In response to an Education Directorate request concerning Orkney's response to wellbeing needs, the EPS has worked in collaboration with the Education Department's Project Officer to:

- Gather data on wellbeing initiatives in Orkney and elsewhere.
- Gather data on the impact of the EP development work in health and wellbeing.

The EPS also responded to a request to examine the robustness of Orkney's procedures for assessment and identification of ASD.

Next Steps.

Training:

- To continue to explore the most effective way to analyse feedback to improve delivery of training.
- To evidence the longer term impact of training to ensure sustainability.
- To explore barriers to implementation where impact has been low.
- Ensure our capacity to deliver training through balancing a response to ad-hoc local needs-led training with training embedded in national, authority and service priorities. The aim should be that the work of the service becomes more embedded in wider local authority plans.

Evaluation and Research:

- To promote the findings of the audit of local ASD diagnostic procedures in order to highlight local good practice.
- To look more closely with partners and colleagues during the VSE week at the specific impacts of our wellbeing inputs and how this impact can be made greater. Theme 1 for VSE.

Contribution of the Educational Psychology Service at Authority Level:

Educational Psychologist take a pivotal role in the following groups convened to manage educational services, statutory functions and to drive forward educational service and integrated partnership strategic objectives:

- Local implementation group for themes of the National Strategy of Autism.
- Getting it Right Implementation Group.

- The Child and Adult Protection Training Group.
- ASD Training, Audit and Development Group.
- The Literacy Strategy Group.
- Complex Autism Strategy Group.

The Service contributes to the work of a number of other multi-agency strategic and operational groups across the Council:

- The Early Years Collaborative.
- Child Protection Committee.
- ASD Diagnostic Pathways Group for Adults.
- The Children and Young Person's Planning Partnership.
- Permanence and Care Excellence Quality Improvement Working Group.

The Service contributes to a number of educational service meetings which support the strategic objectives of the educational services:

- The Educational and Leisure Team.
- The School Service Team.
- The Leaders of Learning Group.

The EPS also leads or contributes to groups set up to share good practice on assessing and meeting needs and providing resources for children and young people with additional support needs:

- Twilight group for teachers on children with attention difficulties.
- Multi-agency twilight groups on meeting the needs of children with attachment difficulties.
- Nurture approaches practitioner reference groups.
- Practice Information Exchange Forum.
- The High Cost Packages Group.

Section 6

How Good is our Leadership?

All members of the EPS have a responsibility for taking forward elements of the Service Plan and initiatives evolving from the Plan. The Service Plan continues to be developed and reviewed by the team as a whole during team meetings. This makes the Service Plan a working document and strengthens the professional leadership of each EP.

Regular team meetings have an interactive agenda which encourages each EP to contribute by adding to standing agenda items (service delivery, service development, research and evaluation, contribution to or participation in authority meetings/developments and CPD). Recent reflections have highlighted that these evaluations of impact have not been shared with partners who could act to increase our impact.

The Orkney EPS is an outward looking service which has sought to develop and learn from other services. Attendance at the SDEP annual conference is prioritised

as is attendance by the Principal Educational Psychologist at the North East and East Principals Group. Strong links have been forged and maintained with Highland and Shetland EP Services for joint training, etc.

The Principal Educational Psychologist encourages the particular strengths and skills within the team as a whole to be utilised. All EPs in the team have the opportunity to work together or singly on service developments and staff training, lead on projects and initiatives and to contribute to strategic groups, taking forward both Service and Authority objectives.

All of the above has shared and developed expertise and enhanced leadership capacity. This has been important at a time when the Senior Psychologist prepares to retire in September and the EPS considers how best to maintain its capacity to promote service aims and objectives, reflecting on the possible redesign of service delivery models and desirable skill sets within the team.

Next Steps.

- To evaluate our contribution to strategic groups.
 - Are EPS involved in the right way in the right meetings?
- To ensure the work of the EPS and in particular its research and evaluation data is integrated with other forms of performance monitoring and is publicised within the authority to influence improvement planning.
- To reflect on the configuration of future service delivery with our education partners.

Section 7

Strengths and Areas for Development / Key Challenges

What are our Overarching Strengths?

- Solution-oriented principles underpin all EPS practice. There is evidence of strong commitment, knowledge and skills across the team.
- There is a useful mix of professional and personal qualities within the team as a whole (flexibility, energy, optimism, reflection, creativity and ability to communicate and inspire others).
- There is a good ethos of collegiate working and team support.
- EPs are delivering a wide range of effective approaches to promote learning and wellbeing through highly valued staff training and support.
- There are some strong partnerships within and beyond education services to deliver improved outcomes for learners and maintain children in families, local schools and beyond.

Areas for Development / Key Challenges.

- Ensuring robust systems are in place to consult with key stakeholders in order that self-evaluation consistently informs service planning.
- Ensuring a closer identification of the key areas, linked to wider planning that will have the greatest impact on children and young people.

- Use relevant data to evidence the impact of the work we do across all of our core functions.
- Use data more routinely to inform future service delivery, i.e. attainment and wellbeing research.
- Working with education partners to achieve a more focused approach to staff development around key authority priorities and embedded in school planning cycles.
- Providing evidence of the longer-term impact of training/development work and its contribution to closing the attainment gap, e.g. is our wellbeing work leading to better learning?

The EPS aspiration is that the achievement of the above will demonstrate the value of involving Educational Psychology at the forefront of initiatives including the planning stages and in embedding our knowledge in authority planning.

Section 8

Capacity for Improvement

There are procedures in place at various levels to ensure continuous improvement. Our consultative model of service delivery involves continuous reflection with a plan-do-review model reflected in our consultation action records for individual casework, our planning templates for regular school visits and most emphatically our end of year reviews with each school. These are now planned to involve each school's Service Improvement Officer.

At an individual level, EPs are able to identify personal areas for improvement that align with service priorities through the professional review and development process and annual appraisal meetings.

Challenges / Implications for Practice

Orkney Educational Psychology Service faces particular challenges as it seeks to continuously improve:

- There are only 2 full-time equivalent psychologists who cover a very wide range of work and a complex geography of schools.
- The Principal Psychologist is a practitioner Principal who carries a large caseload in addition to service management duties.
- The Senior Psychologist retires in September – should the service look for a full-time main-grade psychologist or seek to fill a part-time post? Part-time posts create a diversity of ideas and skills but can restrict opportunities to come together (as part-time EPs do not always work on the same days).

Despite the above challenges, Orkney EPS is confident it can continue to improve and towards this end embraces the support and challenge of the VSE process to help us examine the challenges raised through this document and help us mould our future direction.

Appendix 1

Feedback from Schools

A. School Visits by an Educational Psychologist.

1. What proportion of school visits by your EP are:

	All.	Most.	Some.	A Few.	None.
Scheduled (planned several months ahead).	25%.	56%.	13%.	6%.	0%.
Arranged less than a month ahead.	0%.	0%.	13%.	62%.	25%.

How well does this meet the needs of your school?

- This meets our needs well. Should any new concerns come to light we always know the next date the EP will be in the school and can let her know we had additional concerns to discuss with her. Meetings can then be arranged for the following meeting day.
- This meets the needs of the school very well.
- I like to have the visits planned well in advance as it helps overall organisation and forward thinking for meetings, etc.
- Fine.
- Usually meets it well, but we haven't used the service that much recently.
- Prefer at least 2 months' notice, ideally sketch out a year plan for visits. Other professionals need a good period of notice in order to attend.
- Very well organised and prepared. All planned a year in advance with changes made as and when required.
- Fine – we can alter dates to suit if needed.
- Effectively meetings the needs of our school.
- Generally meets the needs; however, on occasion, a quick response to a specific issue is required.
- Very well.
- Very well. We ensure that we have a programme of reviews, planned class visits and support and training built into the school calendar.

2. During a visit, what type of activity does the EP engage in?

	Always.	Usually.	Sometimes.	Hardly Ever.	Never.
Reviews.	37%.	25%.	38%.	0%.	0%.
Planned consultations with staff.	25%.	19%.	56%.	0%.	0%.
Planned consultations with parents.	13%.	31%.	37%.	19%.	0%.
Observations.	0%.	19%.	81%.	0%.	0%.
Direct 1:1 with pupils.	0%.	31%.	63%.	6%.	0%.
Ad-hoc / 'drop-in' staff consultations.	0%.	0%.	25%.	56%.	19%.

	Always.	Usually.	Sometimes.	Hardly Ever.	Never.
Staff meetings.	0%.	0%.	56%.	38%.	6%.
Staff training.	0%.	0%.	81%.	19%.	0%.
Feedback to staff.	13%.	25%.	44%.	12%.	6%.
Forward planning.	37%.	31%.	19%.	13%.	0%.
Group consultations with practitioners.	0%.	0%.	50%.	50%.	0%.
Staff consultations on action research / professional update.	0%.	13%.	6%.	44%.	37%.
Project development / implementation.	0%.	0%.	62%.	31%.	7%.
Reflection in impact / effectiveness.	13%.	25%.	56%.	6%.	0%.

3. Which of the above contact with the EP are most useful and why?

- The time for staff to discuss areas of concern with the EP are always useful as they have a direct impact on the children in our care.
- Review meetings are also invaluable as we are able to have all partners together for this instead of liaising via email or phone.
- Reviews and consultation with staff – reviews are very helpful as it allows all parties (i.e. parents, child, EP and other services) to discuss child's progress and talk about next steps.
- Getting feedback from observations and assessments and how to plan effectively for that child is very helpful.
- Observations are very useful along with time to discuss the impact on any interventions across the schools/with individuals. Reviews are also a key part of the role. This session we have benefitted from input to develop staff expertise and also to support a language development project.
- Any contact with the EP is useful as it is usually planned for a specific purpose.
- Helping to find out in more detail where children need more support as we can then target staff time and resources more effectively.
- Feedback to staff is very useful as it enables them to begin or continue a programme of support and also to prepare parents for meeting the EP. The incidence of staff training has increased recently, when the quality is as good as it has been recently we want that to continue.
- Reviews – due to the amount of pupils supported by services in our setting. Forward planning to ensure consistency and regular meetings around supported pupils and families.
- All are useful as they are planned and purposeful.
- Reviews and consultation with parents.
- Reviews – value EP's objective and specialist knowledge when supporting children's needs.
- Direct contact with pupils – to gain a greater understanding of a child's needs. Observations – to gain a greater understanding of the child's needs, plus staff training. Feedback to staff – progresses child plans.

- The planned consultation is very used to ensure the pupils' needs are met.
- The one-to-one pupil sessions are very useful.
- The staff training delivered here was very valuable.
- The forward planning is essential.
- Review meetings and planned consultations ensure that we have a clear focus.

4. What impact do you feel these contacts have on:

(a) Raising pupil attainment.

- They certainly have some impact here are any support we have in place is planned with a view to help the pupil's wellbeing and this in turn impact their attainment.
- Helps focus ways to raise attainment by allowing staff to understand the challenges the pupil is experiencing and making suggestions of resources/strategies that staff might try which will help the pupil.
- Working together helps us to look at means of meeting pupil needs more effectively and therefore the potential for all children to meet their potential and reduce barriers to learning.
- Help to provide strategies which make it easier for children to manage, cope, participate in the classroom and therefore to achieve more.
- Where children have been seen and resources suggested pupils attainment has been raised.
- If the EP is effective and the communication of strengths and weaknesses of an individual pupil are accurate then teachers can act on the information effectively to raise attainment.
- Focused meetings around the pupil with clear action plan for all parties involved.
- For individuals on a child's plan they can be significant. For staff training, e.g. Emotional Resilience, they can upskill staff and also improve learning capacity and environments.
- Creating a cohesive team approach.
- The EP's role helps identify accurate and useful next steps for pupils.
- Evidence of continuity and progression in child plans.
- It supports taking away the barriers to learning.
- The work around emotional resilience support pupils in the Senior Phase.
- Consultation with staff has helped support staff in raising pupil attainment.
- Pupils are better supported so that they are able to achieve the best they can.

(b) Partnership working.

- Excellent opportunity to come together to plan for and discuss how best to support individual children and their families.
- Regular visits helps all involved to have a better understanding of individuals needs and helps them work effectively together to support that individual.
- This is mainly effective and builds wider relationships with other services too, especially in reviews and supporting the wider needs of a family.
- Very good – the EP is easily contact by email/phone and responds quickly to requests.
- We haven't done much of this.

- Accurate analysis of a child's difficulties enable us to communicate much more effectively with NHS staff for example so that effective interventions can be worked out.
- Outside agencies, parents, EP and school staff all focused around the need of the pupils.
- Maintains and nurtures effective relationships between child, school, outside agencies and parents.
- Creating a cohesive team approach.
- The planned reviews offer an effective forum for various partners to come together.
- Close relationships between lead professionals and EP.
- Very positive impact for pupils, parents and staff.
- The flexibility (home visits) has been very helpful.
- The emotional resilience programme – CAHMS/EP/SFL/Guidance was very effective. This is having a wider impact in terms of sharing practice and development.
- The review meetings promote better partnership working. We could extend this further but due to our location it is not always possible to have all the professionals in person around the table.

5. After a visit:

What form of follow-up is provided by the EP after a school visit?

- Our EP always lets us know of any actions she has taken forward and liaises with HT and SflT via email or phone.
- The EP sends out a summary record of what they have done on their visit and suggestions of the next steps that should be taken.
- There is written record and sometimes email communication.
- Usually setting the date for the next consultation/check on progress.
- Written feedback.
- The next visit. Further follow up would only occur if we request it.
- Review of previous visit detailing summary and action points.
- Paperwork is shared.
- Telephone conversations, video conferences, emails.
- Detailed notes.
- Always a report to follow up, reading material, training materials.

How helpful is this?

- The process is organised and works well.
- It is quite helpful.
- It helps us keep the focus on the children and helps forward plan to the next visit.
- To maintain momentum and ensure strategies put in place are being used and are effective or whether they need to be changed.
- Allows us to keep records and to feed into IEP.
- Acts as a focus for follow up visits and prepares for the next meetings and visit.
- Always helpful as it is based on need of child/parent/staff/school.
- Always helpful as everyone has a record.

- To help us plan and move forward.
- Support forward planning and gives is a chronology. It also helps plan the one-to-one session for pupils.
- Very helpful.

How could it be improved?

- We would always like more EP time but they are stretched very thin!
- If the EP has been able to speak to staff this is all that is needed. However, if EP have not been able to speak to the staff involved then more information would be beneficial.
- I think it works well and can't think of any specific improvements.
- I would like to see a brief summary of the consultation from the EP, it is usually school staff who take notes, but this doesn't always have the conclusions from the EP perspective.
- Getting the paperwork sooner after a visit.
- Happy with how this works.
- Can be restricted by the part-time hours of the EP and/or staff – finding times that work for all can be a problem.
- Focus of child progress since last meeting to inform the next stage of planning.
- We are very happy with what is currently provided.
- Have more EPs so that they are not so stretched in their work.

B. Wider EPS Work

6. Do you participate in any non school-based work with the EPS?

- Yes - 75%.
- No - 25%.

If 'yes', please specify:

- Staff members have been involved in an attachment group and in an attention deficit group this year.
- Getting it Right for Every Child Implementation Group, Early Years Development Team.
- As part of HT meetings e.g. Named Person training.
- The EPS has recently been much more effective in providing professional learning opportunities which have been of a very good quality. The EPS has also give us the opportunity to work directly with Studio III which has been very useful. Previous experiences of professional learning workshops, etc. by the service were of a not very high standard and consequently had low impact.
- Solution Oriented School, Emotional Resilience.
- Attachment Group.
- SfLT involved in POLAAR programme.
- CPD as part of INSET, dyslexia, mindset, health and wellbeing.
- GIRFEC Implementation Group.

What does the EPS contribute to this process?

- They lead these sessions and give advice as well as facilitating discussion and the sharing of good practice.
- Knowledge of current legislation/practice and valuable shared experiences.
- Clarifying roles.
- Organisation and delivery.
- Provide support and guidance.
- Key worker in the group.
- Helped arrange and facilitate the twilight sessions.
- By providing professional knowledge.
- Overview of the LA position and also bringing information from related professional bodies and wider professional experiences. A national steer into local context.

How does this contribute to:

Raising Attainment?

- They certainly have some impact here as any strategies and knowledge we gain is used with a view to help the pupil's wellbeing and this in turn impacts their attainment.
- Assists in creating an overview across the authority as part of the wider service.
- More specific and focused targets.
- Effective professional learning will have a direct impact on attainment. A direct impact is the engagement of pupils who were disengaged or partially engaged.
- Part of school improvement.
- Staff better able to meet the needs of children, with attachment needs/disorders.
- Identify gaps in pupil's knowledge and intervene at an early stage.
- Areas of input have been highlighted in SciP as developmental areas.
- An awareness was developed between all services to ensure effective universal support through the named person provisions.

Partnership Working?

- It is always useful to discuss strategies and ideas with other partners and these groups have facilitated this well.
- Raises awareness of partners working around children and what they can offer – opportunity to share perspectives and develop a commonality and shared understand of pupil needs.
- Shared language.
- Work with Studio III helps us work much more knowledgeably with parents. Studio III has also worked directly with parents recently which has been very well received.
- Supports pupils and staff working together for the same outcome in our school.
- Multi-agency staff sharing pedagogy and good practice.
- The programme has enabled me to work with P1 staff, SIO and EP.
- Contact with all members of staff to inform and to develop a can-do ethos within the school.
- Developing a shared understanding of the national expectations involved for these children.

C. Future EPS Organisation and Delivery

7. In your view, how could EP time be better used to:

(a) Raise pupil attainment?

- If time allowed it would be useful to have more EP time to discuss children with smaller barriers to learning and ways to help them raise attainment.
- Schools need to enable EP to discuss pupils with their teachers and learning support staff.
- Continue to work with HT and staff on aspects of school improvement planning, close evaluation of what is working well and what can be improved. Focus on the health and wellbeing of children.
- More training of support staff in specific resources.
- Prompt responses to assessment requests would be very helpful. There has been improvement here lately but in the not so distant past the school has struggled to obtain the support and help with the identification of individual pupil needs that it has required. This is an improving situation, however.
- More individual work with individual pupils.
- By providing manageable strategies that can be used in the classroom.
- Greater 1:1 work with pupils.
- Continued involvement with the whole school initiatives which build on EPs current practice.

(b) Improve partnership working?

- Schools need to enable EP to discuss pupils with their teachers and learning support staff.
- Continue to develop links and shared understanding – joint training opportunities.
- Have dates where EPs might be able to attend staff meetings.
- Recent work has helped us to consider better ways to engage and support parents.
- This works well in our case.
- Bring together outside agencies with more coherence.
- Continue to develop alternative methods of linking all partners at all times (isolated situation).

8. What are the benefits to you of having a named EP for your school?

- We have built up a really positive relationship with our EP and this helps us move forward quickly in supporting children.
- Partnership working and team work is much more effective when the same EP visits schools.
- Continuity and consistency and a relationship built over time, getting to know the needs of children and supporting staff too to try ideas – building positive relationships.
- Know who to contact. Have a good, on-going working relationship. Regular visits and on-going collaborative work with school staff to support children and families.
- We know who to contact and they know the children after a few visits better.

- I think this is essential, it provides continuity for individual children. Continuity for staff.
- Consistency across the school. Known to pupils, staff and parents.
- Consistency, building confidence and positive relationships. Having a person to speak for the children/school who is independent of the school.
- Continuity.
- Continuity for staff, parents and pupils.
- We have somebody who knows the school and the families involved, and has developed good relationships. Is involved in whole school development in a systematic way.
- Having a point of contact which is consistent, reliable and part of our school community is extremely valuable.
- The link between the school and its associate primaries is strengthened by a named EP.
- We have someone who we are able to build up a good relationship with, we know who to contact directly if we have any problems, our EP understands our school context and due to making lots of classroom visits often then knows the pupils that may crop up in her case load.

9. What are the benefits of having allocated time and scheduled school visits?

- We know in lots of time which review meetings will be happening when and this gives staff and parents time to prepare. It means we can also keep a note of other children we have concerns about as we know a meeting day is always round the corner.
- Schools are able to plan ahead to allow the necessary staff to attend reviews or consult with EP.
- Again – clarity and consistency and easier for planning, trying to get cover for meetings, etc.
- Better able to plan the valuable and limited time resource of the EP. Knowing that there are times when we can rely on having the EP visit.
- Allow us to plan ahead.
- These are essential for this school. However, this school requires more EPS time than is currently allocated. We do not know how EPS time is allocated, is it by school size or identified need within the school?
- Regular input from the service. Consistency across the school. Known to pupils, staff and parents.
- We do not waste what is a limited resource.
- Vital in an island setting and for forward planning.
- Plan review meetings effectively, organise observations.
- Clear understanding of expectation from both sides.
- Planning is key and is supporting by this enabling us to provide a better service to pupils.
- We are able to plan ahead and ensure that there is a planned programme of support and review in the school. We know that if issues arise we are able to put new cases forward at meetings.

10. Please share any ideas you have about how you might like to work differently with the EPS in future

- While the system works well there is very little wriggle room for change and days are jam-packed. It would be great to have days set aside for visits which do not involve review meetings and involve more 1:1 work with children.
- EPs already lead CPD sessions collectively with staff from lots of schools. Perhaps they could run CPD sessions with all staff in individual schools on the schools specific needs, e.g. if they had a pupil with challenging behaviour.
- Continue to work more on whole school improvements, not just individual pupil meetings. Sharing of expertise and support extended. Supporting in implementing new legislation.
- Have dates where EPs might be able to attend staff meetings.
- The current improvements that are occurring are the sort of improvements we would have identified. We do still need a diagnostic service. We do still need advice about individual children. Professional development support is now very helpful.
- Visits are very review based focus and more work with pupils and staff would be a benefit. Aware also that this is how we as a school choose to run these visits. So more visits would help develop this.
- Clarity about frequency of reviews. Evaluation of the management of the reviews (i.e. who leads? Preparation for the child and staff).
- Reduce VC time/or more reliable link. More time set aside to be reactive.

11. Please share any ideas you have for re-organisation and development of the EPS:

- My main suggestion would be for there to be at least one additional EP but I know this is unlikely!
- Continue to focus on the wider picture such as supporting projects that make a difference to children.
- There is more and more demand for EP time and it is obviously limited. To meet the increasing demand for children with needs there should be another (more time with) EPs.
- When the service is effective and supports what we identify as our needs it is very useful and we would like more of it. However, in the recent past it has been a battle to obtain the service we wanted, this was very unhelpful and stressful. If the improvement we have seen over the last year continues we would not want any significant change.
- Keep it consistent. We worry about service decrease in schools. Feel that more time would be benefits and if that is not possible then no cuts to service.
- Allocation of EP time shouldn't be on size of school, but on need.
- It is extremely important to have the same EP for a secondary and its associate primaries.

Return rate – 47%.

Appendix 2

Feedback from Professionals

1a. I am clear about the role and remit of the EPS.

Strongly Agree.	Agree.	Disagree.	Strongly Disagree.	Don't Know.
20%.	53%.	20%.	0%.	7%.

1b. What further clarification of roles or remits would be helpful?

- Who exactly does what – and what ages/groups.
- Information on Michael McCreadie's role and reports/advice from his visits.
- Written advice regarding behaviour management programmes and reports from EP assessments.
- The role and remit appears so wide ranging and fluid, identifying priority areas may help.
- Criteria – remit.
- Any updates passed to wider services if roles/remits change.
- I think it would be helpful if there was some joint training/meeting with Ed Psychs particularly around LAC and Permanence Planning, and associated transitions for children.

2. EP's respond promptly (to requests, phone calls, emails).

Strongly Agree.	Agree.	Disagree.	Strongly Disagree.	Don't Know.
13%.	67%.	20%.	0%.	0%.

3. The output (e.g. information, training) from the EPS is of a high quality.

Strongly Agree.	Agree.	Disagree.	Strongly Disagree.	Don't Know.
13%	67%	0%	0%	20%

3b. Examples of impact:

- Improved feedback to Probationers on research projects.
- Improved experience for Probationers research next year.
- Sorry, I cannot really say – I haven't been on any such training for some time.
- I have found the training for GIRFEC meetings has been really effective and helpful to me.
- Input often results in more relevant interventions.
- Sharing ideas.
- Support with practice.
- Service contributes to workshops at in-service events for early years.
- VW offered individual training on Orkney ASD parenting programme for two colleagues to enable us to deliver programme to parents.
- Solution Oriented Training – paperwork and strengths based approach embedded in work practice.
- Solution Oriented meeting format.
- Child protection training for staff, feedback from attendees positive.

- I haven't been to any training by the service lately.

3c. It would have even more impact if:

- Input to Probationers CPL sessions had been planned.
- We met for more professional updates.
- Some aspects – e.g. autism, could be delivered over an extended period, where each session built on the previous – this might help practice to be embedded.
- Where there is potential diagnosis that this is communicated to child, family and professionals formally and clearly.
- I am not sure if training is available to services out with education.

4a. EP makes effective contributions to interdisciplinary working groups.

Strongly Agree.	Agree.	Disagree.	Strongly Disagree.	Don't Know.
50%.	40%.	10%.	0%.	0%.

4b. Examples of impact:

- I am very glad of the EPS with regard to one case I work with.
- Chairing meetings and guiding the GIRFEC process.
- Excellent contributions to Early Years Development Group.
- Frequently (usually?) head up or chair these groups to great effect.
- More frequently leads to action rather than just words.
- Very helpful input to Child's Plan development and creating staged intervention in the early years document.
- Helped keep group focussed, moving forward and respectful.
- Work on developing a Child's Plan format for Orkney which has allowed for successful meetings with parents and a clear system for setting action and renewing them.
- Staged intervention (VW).
- GIRFEC – development of the Child's Plan (VW).
- Solution Oriented Approach (VW and CL).
- Creation of staged intervention document for early years, as a more useful and targeted document.
- Multi-agency meetings, integrated assessment and Getting it Right implementation work.
- Attendance at meetings, better time management in order that they can participate fully in meetings.
- IEP meetings.
- Strategic work in development of ASD pathway.
- Suggestions and input to Child's Plan meetings.

4c. It could be further improved by:

- No improvement necessary.

5a. My service has worked with EP in relation to research and development.

Strongly Agree.	Agree.	Disagree.	Strongly Disagree.	Don't Know.
7%.	27%.	13%.	0%.	53%.

5b. In what ways could the EPS further improve its contribution to research and development?

- Teacher Professional Enquiry Skills could be developed.
- I am aware of joint working with EP and AALDS on research and development but not aware of details as this happens at a strategic level.
- Multi-disciplinary discussions on new research or ways of working and how these could impact or be taken forward to Orkney.
- Some members of team (e.g. VERP) have been involved.

6a. EPs work effectively in partnership with my service to support children's development.

Strongly Agree.	Agree.	Disagree.	Strongly Disagree.	Don't Know.
27%.	60%.	0%.	0%.	13%.

6b. Examples of impact:

- Input to Probationers training programme; resources for probationers.
- The acquisition and reviewing of off-island placements.
- Worked together to assist child towards self-efficacy.
- My work is very often directly as a result of EP support.
- Very little of my current practice has been unaffected by my EP colleagues.
- Through aspects such as the Early Years Development Team. Some members of the team work alongside EPs in supporting families and this supports both families and individual practitioners.
- Collaborative working supporting vulnerable family on Hoy (VW).
- Discussion/guidance/support much appreciated when needed (VW and IK).
- Effectively chair child's plan meetings and give helpful information to solve problems.
- Looked after children, child protection, children with complex needs.

6c. It could be further improved by:

- More input directly to probationers (professional enquiry especially).
- No improvement needed.
- Similar involvement with other children (working towards self-efficacy).
- Joint assessment/observation of children with complex needs and/or development delay (not just ASD) with discussions about interpretation of behaviour and how to meet these needs, e.g. similar to Raeden assessment.
- More scheduled training/sharing of practice.
- Consistency in approach.

- Greater understanding between services about roles, interventions, knowledge of practice, procedures, etc.

Return rate - 42%.