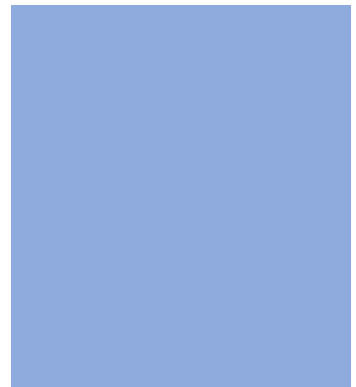
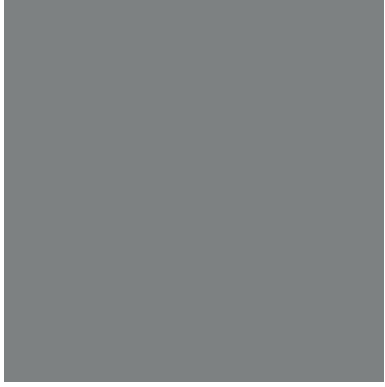




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Educational Psychology Service

Standards and Quality Report

2022-2023

Education & Children's Services

Introduction

The Educational Psychology Service (EPS) has statutory duties to advise on educational needs and delivers on this through the nationally agreed framework of five roles encompassing consultation, assessment, intervention, training and development work and research. These roles are enacted at the level of a child or young person, group or school, and authority wide. This work includes support and quality assurance work in relation to children and young people placed in schools outside the authority, as well as supporting schools when critical incidents occur.

Session 22-23 saw the implementation of the revised service delivery model, against a backdrop of continued high demand for both casework and development work. Specifically, the small school model of accessing the EPS via group consultation was removed, clear casework priorities were shared with establishments and used to inform decisions about prioritising work. In addition, a weekly consultation phonenumber was established, providing a guaranteed EP consultation regarding emerging issues, a first point of contact for ELC with the service and a support in the situation of staff absence.

The EPS was short-staffed throughout 22-23 due to long term absence, and experienced several staff changes due to retiral and return from maternity leave. This has an impact upon coverage of service delivery to schools and aspects of development work that were not taken forward or within expected timescales.

This report is presented under the five headings of the National Improvement Framework to represent work carried out for the related ECS priorities. The 'Organised to Deliver' section looks at self-evaluation and service delivery for the core delivery of a support service.

- Placing the human rights and needs of every child and young person at the centre of education
- Improvement in children and young people's health and wellbeing
- Closing the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged children and young people
- Improvement in skills and sustained, positive school-leaver destinations for all young people
- Improvement in attainment, particularly in literacy and numeracy

Placing the human rights and needs of every child and young person at the centre of education

CIRCLE – Excellent Inclusive Practice

During 2023-24 the focus was on consolidation of work on universal inclusive practice and implementation of the Participation Scale (additional level) to support assessment and planning for individual learners. All schools have begun implementation of CIRCLE,

some have not fully completed the first phase (considering inclusive social and physical environments and associated adaptations for their learners) due to other priorities within the school, or individual circumstances of particular staff. The survey conducted in June '23 with school leaders showed that 85% of responding schools had achieved or were on track to complete CIRCLE at the universal level with all teachers by the end of the summer term 2023. 15% (5 schools) reported that 100% completion of this target would be carried over to 23-24. Over 50% of schools had gone beyond this and were on track to have completed implementation at the additional level by June 2023 (considering the individual needs and associated adaptations).

Ongoing support was offered to schools through CLPL materials and termly collaborative conversations to share practice. Work was done to link CIRCLE to inclusion processes and to illustrate what an inclusive classroom might look like. In response to feedback from schools, work began on developing materials for parents and carers about CIRCLE and inclusion.

ECS Panel contribution and outwith authority placement work

The Principal and the Depute Principal Educational Psychologist are members of the ASN panel, the Transitions Panel, the CSP Panel and the Child Protection Committee. In this way the perspectives of educational psychology and the education evidence base are brought into the panel discussions.

EPs work with schools and others to review additional support needs that require consideration at panel level. The EP is asked to provide a summary analysis of the child/young person, their additional support needs, barriers and recommendations. Over the course of 22/23 there were 15 ASN panels covering 77 children and young people, with 12 formal placing requests for out of authority schools. The early years transitions panel met 13 times, covering 67 children and the secondary panel met 14 times covering 94 children and young people.

When a child or young person is placed in an independent special school for educational reasons the EP acts on behalf of the education authority to review the placement and becomes the link for both the school and families. When a child or young person is placed for care reasons the EP will work with the social worker and or school in another authority, when necessary, to review needs from an education perspective and make recommendations. This work can vary across the year and can entail a significant, and unpredictable workload at times.

Ukrainian Families Support

Over the 2022/23 academic session there has been a growing need in terms of the support required by children, young people and their families who have come to PKC following the war in their home country Ukraine. Currently there are 121 children and young people on PKC school rolls, with some beginning to show the effects of having been directly or indirectly impacted by the conflict.

Representatives from the Educational Psychology Service met with professionals from Family Change, Social Work, Inclusion and Community Link to discuss the growing needs and how they could be met. A session was held with parents in June 2023 to provide information around the universal supports that were already available but also to identify where additional support was required. A further session is hoped to be offered to parents in the 2023/24 session. In addition to this, the information shared during this session is to be collated into a document that can be translated and shared by schools and community support groups.

The EPS team also engaged in a group professional development discussion around the conflict situation and gaps in knowledge were identified around the lived experience and impact on these children and young people, what supports are available both within and outwith PKC and how we can support staff to listen to and manage stories of conflict and difficult experiences. This work will carry on into the 2023/24 session to assess and respond to the current picture.

Closing the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged children and young people

The Educational Psychology Service has funding for 1 day a week of one EP's time in relation to the Pupil Equity Fund, used to promote literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing evidence-based interventions to support narrowing of the poverty related attainment gap. Specifically, the implementation and sustainability of Hi 5, Wave 3, Precision Teaching and Self-Regulation were supported in 22-23.

Wave 3 and Hi 5

Fisher Family Trust Wave 3 and Hi 5 are well established within Perth and Kinross. This year's focus has primarily been on sustainability and fidelity.

EPS have coordinated the delivery of both of these evidenced based approaches for over 10 years. A Training for Trainers Wave 3 course delivered by Fisher Family Trust was organised and 8 additional staff were trained. As Fisher Family Trust no longer runs a Training for Trainers course in Hi 5 the development of a training for trainers course by Perth and Kinross which would then be ratified by Fisher Family Trust was negotiated. This course has been developed and delivered to 9 Perth and Kinross staff.

Wave 3 and Hi 5 training was offered to practitioners to equip them to implement the interventions. Additional fidelity checks were added into the pre-course material and funding was secured to purchase appropriate reading resources to set up a lending library.

Despite Hi 5 being an evidence-based approach for both upper primary and secondary, previously participants have been mainly primary. However, this year 6 secondary staff from 2 schools took part.

Evidence obtained via the Closing the Gap tool showed that High 5 was in use in 12 schools, with evaluation indicating gains such as narrowing of reading age gap, improved comprehension and improved writing tracking data. 20 primary schools reported use of Wave 3, with gains including greater reading fluency and accuracy, and increased confidence.

Precision Teaching

This year the focus has been on sustainability with EPS stepping back and ESOs taking a lead role in the organisation, delivery and evaluation of the intervention. Introductory training was delivered to school leaders who were planning to participate in Precision Teaching, particularly those who were new to the intervention. 11 schools attended.

Implementation training was delivered to 21 participants (across 13 Primary and 3 Secondary schools) with ESOs leading and EPS delivering part of the training and contributing to facilitated discussion. Evaluation of the training only had a 29% response rate but those who responded all agreed or strongly agreed that the training outcomes were met. Their knowledge and confidence in improving outcomes for children and young people was rated an average of 8/10.

Data available from the Closing the Gap tool indicates that 10 schools (2 secondary and 8 primary) used the intervention in literacy and 9 (1 secondary and 8 primaries) in numeracy, with learners from P1 to S3. The intervention was rated as fully or partly successful with all cohorts, with evaluative comments including:

“Improvement noted in mental maths assessment scores and teacher feedback shows improvement in speed, accuracy and confidence in class lessons.”

“63% of targeted P7s were able to achieve Second Level on track with support of Precision Numeracy. “

The plan for 2023-24 is that ESOs will continue to lead on Precision Teaching with EPS supporting.

A follow up session is planned for first term of 2023-24 to share practice and support joint problem solving.

Self-Regulation in Action Training 2022-23

19 members of staff from 12 early years, primary and secondary settings participated in the 2022-23 Self-Regulation in Action Training. 7 (37%) participants responded to the final evaluation and reported that the course impacted positively on their self-awareness, knowledge, understanding and professional practice.

The impact on pupils included: being more quickly settled and ready to learn in the morning, using Goal Plan Do Review to work through difficulties, improvements in written and spoken work, improvements in attitude towards written work, increased self-

regulation and use of strategies by young person, increased engagement in bedtime routine at home. The work also had a positive impact on participants' colleagues and a parent.

Across 22-23, a new model of self-regulation support was developed for implementation in 23-24, focusing more on sustainability and building capacity, through working with participants to support the development of self-regulation within their own settings the year after taking part in the course.

Strategic Equity Fund

The Educational Psychology Service has funding for 1 EP 3 days a week from the Strategic Equity Fund; the focus of this to date has been on attendance.

Staged Intervention Framework for Attendance

This year the focus has been on planning next steps to support embedding of the framework and identifying updates required, this has been in partnership with the QIO team. This will involve developing further training, updating the framework to reflect updated attendance guidance and staged intervention framework guidance, sharing assessment tools and improving useability through development of a flowchart and case examples. In order to support an ongoing dialogue with schools, share practice and jointly problem solve there will be termly collaborative conversations in 2023-24.

Interventions to support attendance

Work to date has included:

- Review of data available regarding attendance and equity
- Review of resources from other local authorities/conference attendance
- Review of evidence from literature and practice across Scotland in relation to targeted interventions
- Collation of this into a literature review
- Discussion of implications and gaps arising from literature review within EPS team and with Project Manager
- Development of surveys for partners and EPs re practice in relation to attendance and gaps

Recommended actions arising from the above will be shared with the Raising Attainment Board and actions for 23-34 identified.

Improvement in children and young people's health and wellbeing

Learning Through Play

In the 2022/23 session, the Learning through Play programme involved 8 staff from 6 schools on phase 5 of the programme. It has been decided that this will be the final phase as 64% of PKC Primary schools have now been through the programme (46 out of 72 schools). Going forward, the core concepts of the programme (purpose of play, 5 key indicators of quality play experiences, role of the adult and planning and observing play) will be delivered through a different model.

The Early Years Team have created a play padlet with resources that will be available to all and are offering termly sessions for P1 practitioners around play pedagogy which will be supported by the Educational Psychology Team alongside a termly Collaborative Conversation, open to primary teaching staff to talk and think about play in their contexts.

The final cohort presented their work in the end of session plenary in May 2023, with staff finding positive impacts of their practice on children's engagement in learning and recall of facts, creation of real-life transferable skills, organisational skills, children being more self-directed in their learning and being able to extend their learning through the play activities they had chosen to engage in.

Bounce Back

Bounce Back is a whole school resilience programme, used across PKC Primary Schools. During 22-23, 3 secondary schools continued to implement Bounce Back in Secondary. Bounce Back animations for families were released on PKC social media during a Bounce Back focus month and are available to schools to use as they wish. Collaborative conversations were hosted for both primary and secondary schools, to support implementation, and by the end of session 2 further secondary schools expressed an intention to use Bounce Back as part of PSE. A framework for curricular progression in secondary schools was agreed and materials for S2 on peer relationships developed. These will be shared in 23-24, along with S3 materials on Problem Solving and Coping Skills.

PKC Nurturing Relationships Programme

The PKC Nurturing Relationships programme has now completed its second year, with 28 schools engaging at various levels within phases 1-3 (33% of schools in PKC). Phase 3 school leads have received their training and the first of two whole school core training sessions have been delivered. The second session is scheduled on one of the August inset days to allow phase 3 schools to begin gathering their base line data to inform their next steps at the start of the next academic session.

Of the 10 schools involved in phases 1 & 2, two have already achieved level 1 accreditation with a further six eligible to apply. One phase 1 school is also in the process of applying for level 2 accreditation. Six schools presented at the practice sharing session in May 2023, sharing feedback from pupils and staff:

Pupil feedback:

- Enjoyment of participating in NR school projects.
- An increase in opportunities to develop relationship skills and peer friendships.
- Enhanced support with regulation leading to the development of new skills.
- Increased engagement and attendance within school

Staff feedback:

- A reduction in lost learning time, post transition settling time and classroom incidents.
- An increase in participation for targeted pupils because of nurturing interventions.
- Enhanced support with developing regulation skills which has increased readiness to learn within target groups.

In terms of the whole school core training, phase 3 attendees rated this training 4.6 out of 5, which is an increase from phase 2 (4.3 out of 5) and phase 1 (4 out of 5). When looking at practitioner understanding and confidence, questionnaires completed pre-engagement were repeated at the end of the academic session and increases were seen across the board (figures shown are averages across phases 1 & 2 combined).

- | | |
|--|------------|
| 1. Felt levels of nurture within classrooms. | 68% to 83% |
| 2. Confidence in delivering a nurturing approach. | 57% to 82% |
| 3. Understanding of the nurture principles. | 53% to 79% |
| 4. Knowledge of the nurture principles. | 53% to 79% |
| 5. Understanding of the ethos and values underpinning nurture. | 64% to 85% |

Throughout the academic session, the presence on social media has been maintained with weekly tweets and sharing of practice and resources. This has brought about an 114% increase in twitter followers and impressions with tweets recorded at just less than 18,000 in term 4 alone. The programme team are to continue with their weekly twitter presence with new summer and winter series planned for 2023/24.

In the 2023/24 session we will continue to support our newest cohort (phase 3) as well as supporting the phases 1 & 2 network. Within the second term recruitment will begin for phase 4 with the aim of having a further 20 schools accepted onto the programme. We will also see the publication of an article written by the programme team in the International Journal of Nurture in Education outlining the development of the programme to date.

Selective Mutism

The Tayside-wide Selective Mutism Working group chaired by P&K EPS has continued to meet termly with additional small groups established to work through the variety of tasks.

As research highlights that Selective Mutism can go unrecognized for a significant length of time within the preschool years it was decided important to prioritise this sector initially. Awareness Raising and Intervention sessions have been developed and road tested in a preschool establishment. As a consequence of the training staff both recognised and intervened with several children and reported to find the training helpful. This training will now be recorded and initial discussions have started regarding the roll out within the P&K early years sector.

Parental resources are also currently being developed.

Circle of Connectedness

This year, the project developed, delivered, and evaluated the first session of a two-part training event on Circle of Connectedness – an approach to promoting pupil inclusion and friendships through the intentional facilitation of peer-based support, including Circle of Friends.

The training was delivered to 20 practitioners from the Community Learning Assistant and Community Link Workers teams. The first session (whole day) was held on 19 May 2023, with the second half day session being planned for 27 September 2023.

Feedback (n=11) was positive. All agreed that the training outcomes had been met, and that the training had strengthened their knowledge, understanding, confidence and/or skills. All but one said that they will use what they had learned (the one person who had disagreed cited their work pattern as a barrier). 10 said that the training was either excellent or good with regards to its relevance to their practice, and 10 said that the overall quality of training was either excellent or good. The ratings for knowledge and confidence in improving outcomes for children and young people was between 7 and 9 with an average rating of 7.73.

Suggestions for how the training session could be improved have been incorporated into the second session and will include additional information about how the Circle of Connectedness approaches have been used, opportunities for sharing practice about existing approaches used in schools, and further support to plan implementation in their own schools. The session will also explore what further follow up support would be helpful (possibly a peer support meeting each term) and explore how evaluation can be built in.

Following feedback from the second session, we will be exploring next steps in terms of further training pathways and opportunities available (e.g. restorative circles), and also considering which audience is best placed for the next training programme – planned for May 2024.

Connected Tayside

Work has continued this session for Connected Tayside with the Principal Educational Psychologist leading joint discussions with colleagues in Angus and Dundee, resulting in the Tayside-wide formation of a group to work on multi-media format for a one stop resource on local Mental Health resources. The group has developed a frame for the resource that includes key self-help mental health messages. Discussions have been held with NHS Tayside supported by PKC corporate IT to determine the location of the resource.

Staff Wellbeing

During 22/23 the Principal Educational Psychologist worked with the Inclusion and Wellbeing Officer and the Suicide Prevention and Mental Health Co-ordinator and together they led a short life working group of key staff to bring forward recommendations in the area of support and supervision of those working with responsibility for child protection and safeguarding. As a result of this, recommendations are being implemented into planning for critical incident support and death review systems, a further sub-group is looking at case-based supervision best practice within schools and recommendations were fed into the design of a facilitated, therapeutically based, online support offer for 23/24.

Mentors in Violence Prevention

In the session 2022/23, MVP has continued as a strong presence within the secondary curriculum with 9 out of the 11 secondary provisions having staff trained in the model. One of the remaining schools are looking for training to begin implementation and the other is not able to commence delivery currently. The MVP Network has continued to meet on a termly basis, offering staff the opportunity to network and discuss current issues. Issues raised centered around the release of education staff from classrooms to deliver the programme. As such, contact has been made with various third-party agencies to seek staff willing to support the programme in schools.

There have been three one-day capacity building courses available to staff and third partner agency colleagues over this academic session to address this need, which has led to a further 15 individuals able to support the delivery of the programme. This includes staff from Services for Young People, Police Scotland, RASAC and Street Pastors alongside school staff.

There are also conversations being held with Education Scotland and MVP leads from Angus and Dundee Councils to join up the Tayside offer and create more opportunities for networking and training. This will continue into the next session with termly PKC network meetings and shared opportunities across the Tayside region for sharing good practice.

Community Mental Health Fund programme

The Principal Educational Psychologist has contributed to the steering group for the Community Mental Health Fund, which is overseeing 13 projects, and has continued with the line management of the new post, of Suicide Prevention and Mental Health Co-ordinator, funded through this programme.

One project funded by the programme is the ‘Significant Emotionally Based Absence’ project, which is a partnership with health and the third sector through a steering group chaired by the PEP. A PT, aligned to Navigate, was recruited to manage the project which began to take young people on a pilot in April 2023. The project aims to support a return to active educational engagement for secondary aged young people with mental health as the predominant barrier to their ongoing significantly low attendance.

Social and Emotional Learning Project

This year, the project concluded the literature review relating to social and emotional learning, in particular the definition of SEL and the associated core competencies, resources to assist schools in carrying out self-evaluation (an Audit Tool developed by the Education Endowment Foundation), and the range of evidence-informed interventions – including the challenges involved in interpreting research studies reported in the literature.

Information about the project and progress to date, was shared with Headteachers at their workshop in November 2022. This event provided helpful feedback, including positive feedback about the definitions and the Audit Tool. It also provided very helpful advice about how best to survey local practice – including reviewing school Quality Improvement Plans and discussion with managers of Outreach Teams.

Further exploration into the current offer for SEL was carried out by the EP Team during a CPD day. It involved mapping out and cross-referencing existing approaches and interventions against the SEL competencies they address. This initial work has demonstrated the breadth of the existing offer and has encouraged thinking about how we can ensure the existing interventions are implemented effectively, alongside exploring alternative interventions that PKC may wish to recommend to primary schools (e.g. PATHS, Emotion Works, Zones of Regulation).

An overview of the Project with proposed recommendations has now been written (SBAR, dated 09.06.2023), and these recommendations will inform the focus of work in 2023-24 – most importantly the development of a resource guide to help primary schools effectively assess and support social and emotional learning.

Supporting mental health secondary network

Over the course of this session the EPS offered a termly facilitated network to support senior staff in secondary to reflect on the mental health issues of the young people in their schools. This is in its sixth year and this year had to operate without CAMHS as partner facilitators. Feedback from participants continued to be that this provides a unique and reassuring safe space that is supportive to their roles.

Self-harm

Over 2022-23 the self-harm working group progressed work with two pilot secondary schools through whole-staff surveys (October 2023), followed up by pupil and staff focus groups (November 2023). The themes derived from analysis of the data were fed back to schools through detailed joint discussions with the Depute HTs for Support in each school and self-harm working group colleagues from Lighthouse, CAMHS and school nursing.

Each school agreed to a plan of engagement with professional development opportunities, including generally available offers through CAMHS such as their professional monthly book group as well as bespoke offers of whole-staff training and parent workshops to take place August-November 2023. At this point, there will be an opportunity to revisit the whole-school staff surveys and establish any impact of the engagement work with the two schools.

In parallel with the work with the pilot schools, two Microsoft Sways have been created hosting information on [decision-making around referrals](#) and support for young people who are at risk of or displaying self-harm behaviours – and linking to [advice and professional learning resources](#). In addition, a recorded webinar to orientate practitioners to these resources will be available from October 2023 and a webinar on understanding self-harm will be included on the education service's learning hub training calendar each term of session 23-24.

Suicide Prevention

The EPS has worked closely with the Suicide Prevention and Mental Health Co-ordinator, supporting the risk management approach within schools. The Co-Ordinator and the PEP work together to collaborate with NHS Tayside and the Tayside Suicide Prevention Young People's group and have continued with the pursuit of a multi-agency information sharing agreement and protocols for responding to young people who present high levels of risk and have experienced medical intervention. The EPS has supported the work of the Mental Health Delivery Group in undertaking an action research approach to improved suicide prevention systems in our schools and communities.

The PEP and Tayside Counselling in Schools Co-ordinator have led the development of an authority-wide contract awarded to the Lighthouse Perth for crisis support in schools. This work has embedded crisis support within a mental health continuum of support in school, along with supporting the Mental Health Ambassadors work.

Relationships

With support of an advisor with Education Scotland, the PEP has chaired the 'Nurturing Relationships' framework steering group to ensure actions and recommendations to take forward systems wide relationships work. The group has overseen the consultation and drafting of Relationships policy guidance for schools and a PKC 'statement of approach'. It has collated information to inform actions in respect of relational approaches within the curriculum, aligned work to the anti-bullying strategy consultation and reviewed implementation plans for engagement work in secondary and Restorative Approaches. It has also overseen the work of the Primary level 'Social and Emotional' learning strategy.

All recommendations were collated by June 23, with potential actions for work on Relationships, including SEF work, identified for 23/24.

Interventions Mapping

Work has continued on an interventions mapping tool. The aim is to produce a web-based tool for ECS staff to access information on PKC-recommended interventions, with links to training and evaluation materials. A specific guide for relationships interventions has been designed to be included. The content has been streamlined and gathered into one format. It is due for launch in Autumn 2023.

Critical incident responding

Over the course of 22/23 the EPS responded to three requests to provide support into schools as a result of a death within the community. Such responses continue to be an area of operational priority. The updated critical incident guidance was distributed to schools for the start of the session and a further step is to consider support for teams to plan for such events.

Engagement in Secondary Schools

As part of the relationships framework, and following consultation with DHTs (Support), an action plan has been developed to support engagement in secondary schools. This includes seeking young people's views, as well as developing a strategic map of interventions and approaches to support engagement to support identification of gaps in support. Following agreement from Service Managers and Secondary QIOs as to priority actions, elements of this will be implemented during 23-24.

Restorative Approaches

As part of the Relationships Framework, an action plan was developed, supported by Education Scotland, to deliver CLPL for practitioners and leaders, according to experience, as well as opportunities to consider how to use a relational approach in high tariff situations. This will be implemented during 23-24, and linked to the relationships framework and Anti Bullying Strategy.

Improvement in attainment, particularly in literacy and numeracy

Dyslexia Pathway

Further to local evidence of difficulties with the current P&K dyslexia pathway being overly detailed and time consuming a working group with Primary Pupil Support Teachers, their manager and EPSs was established. A new streamlined draft pathway has been developed for primary schools. The next step is to invite secondary colleagues to join the working group in order to amend and pilot the pathway for secondary school use.

Improvement in skills and sustained, positive school-leaver destinations for all young people

Optimising Student Success 22/23

Participating secondary schools embedded learning about evidence-based study strategies by young people within the senior phase PSE curriculum, as well as mentors in a subset of schools using the strategies to raise attainment with individuals.

Materials to support assessment anxiety were developed with school practitioners and the targeted intervention piloted by a sample of schools, with a focus on reducing anxiety and increasing self-efficacy in relation to assessments and exams. Optimising Student Success was presented to Trainee Educational Psychologists on the MSc course at Dundee University.

Organised to Deliver

Evaluation of Service Delivery

School Evaluation 2022/23

The annual school evaluation survey was sent to all 80 schools and in total 30 responses were received. This is a 37.5% return rate which was a slight increase on last year's rate of 35%. There was representation from primary, secondary and special schools. All respondents had accessed the service during the session.

The average rating for impact of EPS involvement remained the same as last year at 4.1. 45% of respondents gave a score of 5 for impact, with a further 29% scoring 4. This was marginally lower than last year when 78% gave 4 and 5 scores.

The quality of support was a theme in 68% of respondents who added further comment to their rating for impact. Almost a quarter of respondents noted they had benefited from wider development work to support staff training. Advice and guidance around pathways for children and young people and support for families was also highlighted. The small number of respondents with lower ratings noted factors related to availability and flexibility, responding to urgent requests and clarity of service offer as influencing their rating.

In response to a question about training, over three quarters of schools had accessed either recorded or live trainings across the range of areas on offer and in particular CIRCLE, Nurturing Relationships, SIFA and Optimising Student Success.

When asked about the value attributed to the work of the service, the average rating was 4.5 with 64% of respondents scoring 5. As before support was a key theme noted by 50% of respondents. Working directly with children and families was mentioned frequently, including contributing to Child's Plan Meetings and ITMs. Wider support in relation to development work was also noted by a few respondents.

Communication was rated highly with an average of 4.7. Most respondents (73%) rated communication as a 5.

Following consultation last year, the EPS adapted their service delivery model in several ways:

- The introduction of a new weekly phonenumber. Schools were asked to comment on the impact of this. 18 schools reported that they had not required to access the phonenumber, citing ease of contact with their link EP as a reason. In the 10 instances where schools had accessed phone consultation, they had found it helpful, both in terms of advice offered and timely support, when their link EP was not available.
- The introduction of casework priorities to support and clarify decision making about EPS involvement with children and young people. There were a range of responses about the impact this had had. About a third of respondents noted no change or a lack of clarity about what this meant in practice. A similar number of respondents commented positively, with a few noting that support was directed to the most complex cases.
- Service delivery to small schools changed from group consultation to a return to direct consultation with the link EP. The small schools who responded all reported preferring this model.

During 2022/23 a mixture of virtual and face to face contact with the service continued. Feedback from schools indicated that most were happy with the balance and there was a recognition of the efficiency of this, however the value of face-to-face contact was noted in 52% of responses.

Schools were asked what could improve the effectiveness of service delivery. While responses varied according to context, just under one third of responses suggested that more time for direct work would be appreciated, although did recognise capacity issues in terms of the size of the service. Two respondents mentioned valuing regular review with the link EP.

In response to a question about whether they would wish to discuss any elements of the school improvement plan with the link EP, 36% of respondents answered no. Of those that responded positively, most were looking for support around current offers of CIRCLE, nurture and restorative, with one or two more bespoke requests.

When given the opportunity to make any final contributions, all 21 respondents expressed thanks to link EPs or the service and again support was a recurring theme in the responses.

Consultation

EPs record consultation by school. This is defined as consultation which is not part of casework or part of a meeting which discussed multiple children/young people, such as an ITM.

The total number of consultations was 681, for a total of 443 children/young people. In the last academic session the EPS completed 856 consultations for a total of 531 children. The difference may be partly due to some interruptions to service due to staffing changes and absence, as well as the introduction of the telephone consultation line described below.

In the primary sector there were 463 consultations, for 302 children. The range was 0-28 consultations, with the average being between 7 and 8 per primary school. In the secondary sector there were 212 consultations for 137 young people. The range was 3-55 per school, with the average being between 21 and 22 per secondary school.

Qualitative feedback was also gathered through a small number of consultation records. Consultation by the EP service as a core function was positively evaluated and indicates a number of positive outcomes. Consultees reported that EP consultation had been helpful and supportive and indicated a number of impacts. These included providing useful reassurance, signposting to useful strategies and resources, offering helpful advice and discussing realistic next steps.

Comments around the usefulness of consultations for parents and schools include:

“Good to have professional confirmation of response and validation of response”
“useful to have ideas of language to use with young people”

Parents also reported feeling ‘more relaxed and confident about the transition plans and ongoing review’

Consultation Phonenumber

As part of the review of the EPS service delivery model, a weekly consultation phone line for education staff was launched and expanded to include ELC from January 2023.

79 consultations were completed, booked by 10 ELC staff, 59 primary and 23 secondary practitioners. The service was evaluated very positively in terms of ease of access, quality of advice given, and feeling practical suggestions were given that helped with a way forward.

“Even better if our own EP was available but it was brilliant to be able to speak to someone right away and I'm confident the advice would have been similar. As a record of the conversation was passed on it'll be easy for our EP to pick up with the staff who support this pupil right away but crucially our team have been empowered to make a good next step in the meantime.”

“really excellent service. Easy to book, informative and supportive.”

Feedback and usage statistics indicate that the phone line fulfilled its purpose, increasing the accessibility of the service in situations where more immediate advice was needed, as well as providing cover in the case of link EP absence and providing an engagement point for ELC with EPS.

Professional Learning

57 training sessions were delivered by the EPS for a variety of audiences (Teachers, PSAs, PPSTs, CLW, CLA, QIO's and Dundee University students) during 2022-23, on 18 main topics including Learning through Play, Nurturing Relationships, Self-Regulation, CIRCLE and Solution Focused Practice.

Circles of Connectedness CLPL was piloted with Community Link workers and Community Learning assistants and Selective Mutism training piloted with speech and language therapy colleagues. CLPL for Pupil Support staff was again supported by a variety of training events including, Precision Teaching in Numeracy & Literacy, Wave 3 and Hi 5 Literacy Intervention Evaluative feedback highlighted that participant valued:

- Opportunity for discussion, reflection on own practice and identification of next steps with colleagues
- Connecting the theory, evidence and practice
- Real-life examples and walkthroughs of topic in practice
- Chance to meet with other colleagues and hear other perspectives
- Interactive delivery of sessions and quality of trainers

Participants would like future training to:

- Have regular opportunities to revisit what had been discussed
- Continue with having all sessions in person
- Use a case study or real examples throughout the training
- More time for discussion with colleagues
- More practical sessions with more interaction in groups

The most commonly used words to describe EPS training events this session were interesting, helpful, thought-provoking, well delivered and motivational.

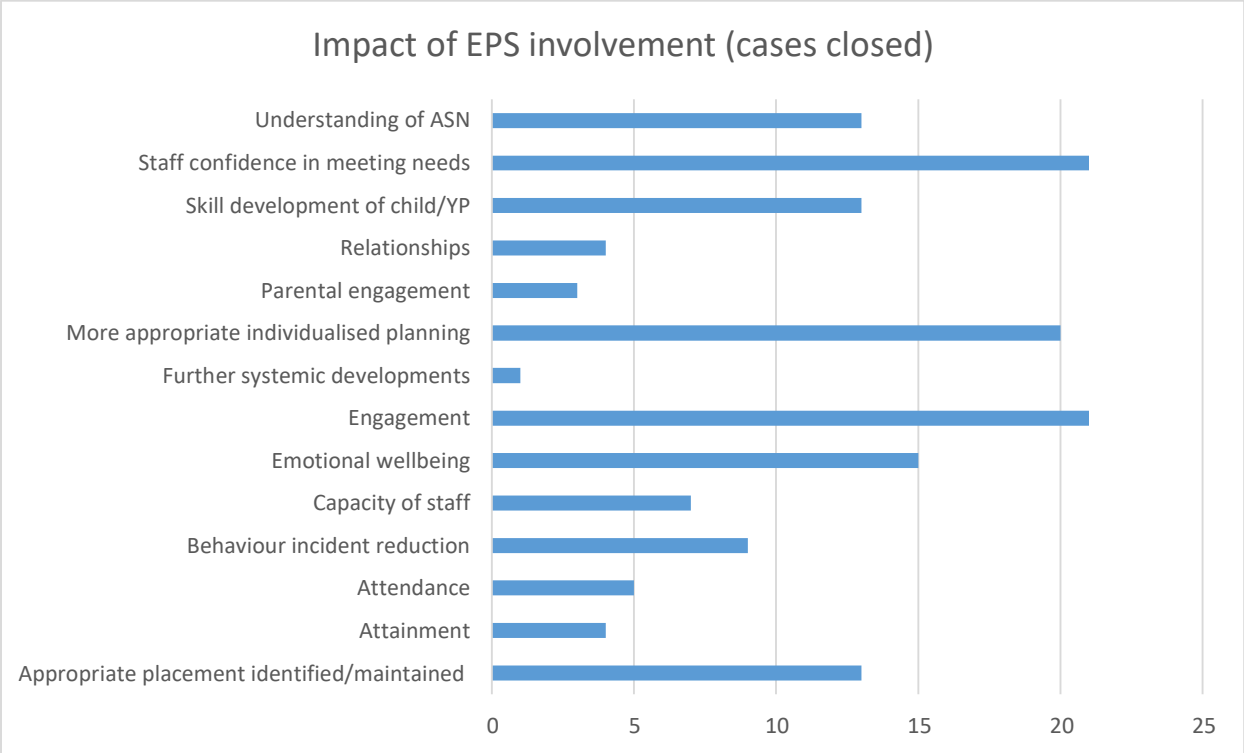
Evaluation of EPS Casework 2022-2023

The evaluation summarised below is drawn from case discharge information, questionnaires completed by children, young people and families, and qualitative evaluations completed by EPs on a sample of casework. The aims of casework captured within the latter evaluations include:

- **Attendance and engagement**
 - e.g., supporting development of confidence and independence in school, supporting development of daily routines, support re-engagement following low levels of attendance
- **Mental health/emotional wellbeing**
 - e.g., self-harming, anxiety, concerns regarding emotional wellbeing at school
- **Developing educational support strategies through assessment/consultation**
 - e.g., planning to support sensory needs, assessing using the SCERTS framework
- **Supporting transition planning**
 - e.g., education reviewing officer role for looked after children looking towards post-school, supporting a positive destination, identifying an appropriate S1 placement

Out of 58 cases closed across the session, 43 noted positive impact of EPS involvement. Cases where no impact was noted did not appear from the information recorded to be characterised by unsuccessful interventions, but rather often indicative of changed circumstances, e.g., change of EP, young person leaving school/area. The category "work completed" comprises both completed piece of work by the EPS and circumstances where a child has left education.

The type of impact noted by EPs is illustrated in the chart below.



Please note that typically more than one type of impact is recorded, so while the chart is based upon 43 case closure forms, the frequencies of impact noted total 149.

The most commonly recorded impacts noted were in “staff confidence in meeting needs” and “engagement”, both comprising 14.1% of the total. These were closely followed by “more appropriate individualised planning” (13.4%) and “emotional wellbeing” (10.1%). The nature of impact appears to have shifted somewhat compared with 2021-2022, where emotional wellbeing was the most frequently noted impact and “reduction in behaviour incidents” did not appear at all (this year comprising 6% of total).

The themes in the table above tie in closely with those reflected in the in depth casework evaluation sample, where positive changes were noted in the following areas:

- Attainment/achievement of national qualifications
- Successful transition to a post-school placement
- Improvement in attendance (time in school and time following class timetable)
- Improvements in self-regulation and social communication and improvement in transactional supports provided by adults in school
- Increased independence – both daily living skills and in terms of reliance on adult support in the classroom
- Skills development
- Improved sleep
- Improved emotional/mental wellbeing
- Improvement in staff skills and confidence
- More appropriate curriculum

Feedback from Stakeholders on Casework

Discussions are ongoing within the EPS about how to improve the process of eliciting feedback from key stakeholders. Improving this process will be included as a service development focus on self-evaluation.

Feedback received about the process of working with an EP on casework focused on the following:

- Openness
- Keeping young people at centre
- Bridging/supporting discussions between families and schools
- Taking a collaborative approach
- Discussion with EP providing clarity in complex situations
- EP providing useful contributions to planning meetings
- Availability of EP helpful in terms of opportunity to talk things through

Young people who returned formal casework evaluation questionnaires (n=3) reported positively on their experience of working with an EP. The average response for how helpful it had been to work with an educational psychologist was 8/10 (1 – not helpful at all, 10 – extremely helpful). Young people were asked what difference (if any) meeting with the psychologist made. One young person said, *“I knew there was someone I could talk to, which was good”*, with others noting *“having a new person who knew nothing of my past let me build a new relationship built on hope and a want for a better future.”* and *“Having a psychologist helped me remember that I’m not just a number [...] I believe my psychologist saved my life and gave me hope for my future...”* .

Within the EPS casework evaluation forms, some direct feedback from young people was also included. This described the relationship built between the psychologist supporting a primary stage pupil with self-harm behaviours and poor mental health and wellbeing where the pupil had started a project at home and *“wanted [the EP] to be first to see it”*, as well as the independence built by a young person following EPS intervention to reduce reliance on Pupil Support Assistant support: *“I’ve realised I definitely don’t need the support in [school subject]”*.

Feedback from parents and carers included:

“Excellent service, she listened and guided. Expertise, compassion and understanding”

“School is going great now, [my child has] come on a lot over the last year.”

“I am so very grateful to you for all your support. I am pleased to say that [my child] has continued to have a better week and seems in a more positive place.”

Capacity for Improvement

During 22/23 the EPS embedded the agreed actions arising from the previous year's review of service delivery, from self-evaluative themes. The telephone consultation line was up and running for the start of session and feedback indicates it has been achieving its purpose of providing ready access to advice and that is well received and appreciated. School ratings for communication have gone up slightly and more work can be taken forward through self-evaluation to ensure that the changes put in place for small schools are having a positive impact.

The EPS was short staffed throughout 22/23 and this impacted upon the ability to drive forward change and improvement to internal systems such as advancements in the cycle of self-evaluation and work with partners; it continued however to look at information storage and work towards the new MOSAIC recording systems and maintained the existing elements of self-evaluation.

The EPS continued to work in a hybrid fashion with feedback from schools staying as high as it had been the previous year after lockdown. Effectiveness relies on good processes and the EPS continues to promote use of Improvement Methodology and will continue this as a professional development focus. It also requires a clear targeting of the unique skills of an EP, and work to look at sustainability of some existing training programmes has been advanced this year to enable the EPS to move forward to responding to further gaps.

Summary - Key achievements and analysis of impact

The academic session 22/23 saw another year of significant development work activity; highlights were the increase to 28 schools involved in the whole-school Nurturing Relationships programme, taking forward outcomes from leading the multi-agency self-harm work, continued impact in areas such as CIRCLE, the self-regulation programme and the literacy work that has demonstrated evidence in closing curricular gaps. In addition, the EPS has led the strategic development of the Relationships framework and production of draft guidance for schools, while continuing to lead developments in Mentors in Violence Prevention. It has worked through the SEF programme to review the evidence base and practice in respect of attendance and use some of this learning to inform ongoing revisions to the Staged Intervention Framework for Attendance. The EPS has been working on a strategy for social and emotional learning while developing training in 'Circle of Connectedness' to enhance inclusion and social skills. It has liaised with colleagues to support the development of secondary curricular materials to continue developing Bounce Back. This has taken place alongside of working with Family Change to support Ukrainian parents and working with health colleagues to provide materials for education staff on selective mutism, a growing area of need. The EPS continued to be involved in the 'Learning Through Play' programme, the review of the dyslexia pathway and Optimising Student Success.

In terms of impact this means that:

- 28 schools are now involved in the Nurturing Relationships programme with safe spaces and wellbeing work impacting on school lives for children and young people and an evidenced reduction in lost learning
- 85% of schools responding to the CIRCLE survey completing work at the universal level
- Schools using Wave 3 and High 5 showing evidence of narrowing literacy gaps, and Precision Teaching also showing successful curricular outcomes
- The Self-Regulation programme evidenced improvements in children and young people's engagement with learning and routines
- 15 more practitioners, including multi-agency partners, trained in Mentors in Violence Prevention
- Self-harm prevention and management materials based on work with PKC young people and staff now available for all
- Updated critical incident guidance issued to schools
- Ratings of impact by schools staying high and consistent with last year, with the quality of support contributing to this along with very high ratings for communication with the service
- 681 consultations (in addition to the weekly telephone service) for 443 children and young people, rated as providing useful strategies and resources, helpful advice and discussing realistic next steps.
- Involvement in casework demonstrated impact themes of changing staff confidence to meet needs, the level of child/young person engagement, appropriate planning and impact on emotional wellbeing *"I believe my psychologist saved my life and gave me hope for my future" (young person) "expertise, compassion and understanding" (parent) "my child has come on a lot" (parent).*
Overall themes from cases analysed showed impact on:
 - Attendance and engagement
 - Mental health and wellbeing
 - Development of educational strategies
 - Supporting transition planning
- Specific examples of impact have included attainment of national qualifications (linked to EP involvement), improvement in sleep and increased independence within the classroom.
- 79 education staff accessed the telephone advice service with positive evaluations for the practical application of advice agreed
- 18 training events of 57 sessions linking theory to practice and the identification of next steps for practice.

The service continues to balance development work with core delivery to schools and to authority processes such as the ASN and Transitions panel, Child Protection Committee and Counselling in Schools programme. Alongside of this wide-ranging development work, the quality of the core delivery, which rose post-Covid, has been maintained, despite a year of reduced staff capacity. This would indicate that the review of the service delivery model has led to positive outcomes and was the right thing to do to ensure both efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery. Further development work on the self-

evaluation cycle, which could not be taken forward this session is needed now however to ensure that this positive trajectory remains. Part of ensuring effectiveness means planning robustly, systematically and with sustainability in mind. Sometimes this requires handing over established training programmes or implementation plans in order to bring forward new required developments. The EPS should continue to use and enhance its use of Improvement Methodology, alongside of self-evaluation to best maintain this progress. Maintaining and supporting effective partnerships is key to this and this should be an area of focus in 2023/24, this will include seeking to understand the challenges faced by multi-agency partners.

Next Steps

In respect of a summary of actions for the 23/24 session, the EPS will:

- Continue with systems level development work in respect of inclusion (CIRCLE, Nurturing Relationships), raising attainment (Optimising Student Success, attendance) Relationships and Behaviour work and mental health.
- Continue this work with a focus on implementation science and factors of fidelity and sustainability, supporting the follow-on work for the Improvement Methodology training and use of the Interventions tool.
- Contribute to the identification of gaps and consideration of targeted interventions and approaches in respect of attendance and relationships and behaviour work.
- Support the work of the ASN Transformation programme and the PKC GIRFEC refresh.
- Maintain the link EP model and work on effective partnership arrangements with key agencies, advancing the current cycle of self-evaluation, including continuing to monitor the effective use of the hybrid model of service delivery.

The EPS will continue to deliver its statutory functions and will ensure a responsiveness to the themes arising from schools and ECS.