

# Delivering Educational Psychology Services – September 2018

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This report aims to update Members on issues regarding recruitment and performance of the Educational Psychology Service.

## 1. Update on the current position:

At the start of the year there was a backlog of unallocated cases. These included a significant number (58) of requests for additional psychological advice to support the conversion of Statements of Special Educational Needs to Education, Health and Care Plans.

From 12<sup>th</sup> January 2018, all new requests for psychological advice as part of the needs assessment process have been allocated with the expectation that reports are submitted within the 6 week timeframe that supports the statutory process. As of 16<sup>th</sup> March, 100% (47) of all psychological assessments have been submitted in a timely manner.

A total of 197 reports have been submitted to the SEN Team since the start of the calendar year. The improved performance has been the subject of a weekly report to the Director which tracks improvements.

In June 2018, 94% of reports requested since 12<sup>th</sup> January had been submitted in a timely fashion.

During August, 48 Appendix D's were completed, of these 29 were completed within 6 weeks = 60.4%.

For the 2018 calendar year, 59.5% of Appendix D's were completed within 6 weeks. (325 out of 546)

	2018		
	Number completed	Number in 6 weeks	Percent in 6 weeks
Statutory Assessments (STASS)	466	314	67.4%
Statutory Re-Assessments (STRE)	80	11	13.8%
Total Appendix D's	546	325	59.5%

## **2. Looking to the future:**

The work related to conversions is coming to a close. There are currently 55 Appendix D assessments awaiting allocation. These will be allocated to Locum EPs, Consideration is now being given to how the EPS can begin to re-engage with schools to complete some pre-statutory work.

### **2.1 Statutory work**

The number of requests to the local authority for Education, Health and Care needs assessments continues at a high level and a high percentage of these are agreed. Each one leads to a request for a psychological advice to be completed within 6 weeks. The EPS is negotiating with SEN Commissioners what contribution it can make to the monitoring and review of EHC plans especially those with most significant needs.

### **2.2 Recruitment**

Despite a rolling advertising campaign a number of EP posts remain unfilled following resignations last year. Recruitment to substantive posts is a problem nationally. As a result, a number of locums are still being used. The Buckinghamshire EPS has a well-established history of enhancing its capacity by employing Trainee Educational Psychologists and Psychology Assistants, although they are not able to fulfil all of the tasks of a fully qualified EP. Both types of posts have proved effective routes for recruitment, with a high percentage of current Buckinghamshire EPs having filled either or both of these roles in the past.

In the short term at least it makes sense to use locum EPs albeit on an associate basis rather than as employees. This will give the service the flexibility to respond to demands and could support the EPS in reintroducing a trading offer again. The EPS is in the process of reviewing Locum contracts and transferring these to Associate contracts.

### **2.3 Early intervention**

The EPS committed one full time equivalent EP (covered by four people) to the SENDIAN pilot. The learning from the pilot will be used to inform the restructure of the SEN/EPS Service.

The Head of Service is leading on the restructure of the SEN/EPS and Specialist Teaching Services. The re-shaping of the Service will ensure workloads are manageable, improved management oversight and an early intervention service into schools. This will ensure that schools are allocated named EPs employed by the council and offered a consultation service. A focus on early intervention will reduce the increasing number of EHCP requests.

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