

How do EPs help?

EPs are child centred professionals who specialise in the development of children and young people who are either in, or about to start nurseries, schools, or any other place of learning.

There are a very wide range of needs that young people may experience, e.g. social and emotional, behavioural, learning, medical, etc. We work hard to try to understand the needs of children and young people.



We talk to all of the important people involved with the young person, including parents / carers and teachers, and any other professionals involved.

Together we can develop strategies for helping or carry out supportive interventions. Sometimes we can get other Services and Agencies involved, who can also provide help and support. We also provide advice for the Education Authority about needs that are likely to be significant and long term.

When would the EP become involved?

Most often the EP would become involved with a young person when a nursery or school makes a referral (with parental consent).

Medical Services also make referrals for pre-school children to the EPS (with parental consent).



These referrals should be made when it is believed that a young person has, or is likely to have, significant needs in their school.

No referrals should be made to the EPS without full discussion with the parents or carers.

Children attending School or Nursery

What happens step-by-step?



The teacher will discuss the needs with the Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCo) in the nursery or school, who may then talk to you. With your permission, the SENCo will consult with the EP. A referral may then be made to the EPS.

The EP may:-

- observe the child in class
- work individually with the child.
- If other professionals are involved, the EP will need to consult with them too.
- meet with the parents and also teacher.
- provide recommendations and strategies that may be helpful.
- work with the child over a period of time
- make an onward referral will be made to another Service / Agency.

After this input, further consultation may occur to consider whether a request for longer term support should be made.

Children in the home or other setting

What happens step-by-step?

Often a medical setting assessment, such as a Child Development Clinic, will result in a referral to the EPS (with parental consent).

The EP will then consider when would be the best time for getting involved (*ideally 6-8 months before the child starts nursery or school*).



This time scale aims to ensure that the information we gather is as current as possible for the upcoming nursery/school placement, so that it will be useful.

However, we also have to make sure there is enough time for the EA to process the information, should additional support be required.

In some cases, the EP may decide that an involvement is not necessary at that time. In this case your child's progress will continue to be monitored by the education provision they attend.

You can contact your local EPS Office on:

Armagh Office
028 3751 2402

Ballymena Office
028 2566 1111

Belfast and Newtownabbey Office
028 9056 4000

Coleraine Office
028 7032 8462

Derry / Londonderry Office
028 7186 4780

Dundonald Office
028 9056 6200

Dungannon Office
028 8772 6430

Enniskillen Office
028 6634 3900

Newry Office
028 3026 6443

Omagh Office
028 8241 1411

Portadown Office
028 3835 1480



Education Authority
Educational Psychology Service

About the Educational Psychology Service

Parent Leaflet