



# **Renfrewshire Educational Psychology Service**

## **Standards & Quality Report**

**April 2015**

# RENFREWSHIRE EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY SERVICE

## STANDARDS & QUALITY REPORT

2015

### CONTENTS

1. Executive Summary
2. The Educational Psychology Service
3. Service Quality Management and Professional Development
4. Service Improvement Targets
5. Supply and Demand Issues
6. Service Highlights
7. Head of Establishment Survey
8. Parent Survey
9. Conclusion
10. Appendix 1: Standards & Quality Improvement Targets for 2014 to 2017

## 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report provides details of the work and self-evaluation activities of Renfrewshire Educational Psychology Service (EPS) over the last two years, from August 2012 to December 2014. This time has been a period of consolidation for the service as it re-adjusted to a reduction in capacity. Despite this, the report provides evidence of continuing commitment to the delivery of high quality front line services to educational establishments. This is evidenced by the positive feedback received from heads of establishments across Renfrewshire. The EPS team continue to work hard to support children, young people, parents, educational establishments and the authority and partnership agencies.

However, while Heads' satisfaction with the EPS remains high in many areas of service delivery, comparison of 2012 and 2014 Heads' surveys indicates a reduction in overall satisfaction, and in satisfaction with "consultation and advice" and "assessment and intervention". This is a continuation of the slight downward trend in satisfaction ratings in these areas since 2011. The reported reasons for this reduction relate to Heads' concern about the amount of time EPs have in schools to carry out these two core functions. Responses point to a perceived need for more EPs. This is the first time since 2011 that there has been a year on year reduction in rating for these areas and reflects the general view among Heads that more EPs are required to help educational establishment support the growing numbers of children and young people who have additional support needs.

In contrast, the survey provides evidence for an increase in satisfaction ratings for "CPD and Training" and "Research and Strategic Development" which is very encouraging as these have been development priorities for the service over the past two years.

In addition to service delivery to individual establishments, the service continues to be committed to supporting council priorities and the report provide evidence for this, including GIRFEC, ASL Act (2009) implementation, "Families First" Early Years Strategy, Validated Self-Evaluation, Promoting Positive Relationships, Nurture, Autism Strategy. The EPS continues to work in collaborative partnership with educational establishments and the ELS Children's Service's team to support the best outcomes for children and young people in Renfrewshire.

Overall, during this period despite a continuing challenging operating context, there is evidence that the EPS has continued to provide a very high quality service to customers and stakeholders. Evidence of impact continues to be strong, reflecting the continuing hard work and commitment of the EPS team. Demands for service input continue at all levels of service delivery and there is also an ongoing requirement for the service to contribute to strategic Children's Services' priorities. Moving forward, it is essential that the service continues to maintain an effective balance between front line service delivery to educational establishments and involvement in strategic priorities.

## **2. THE EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY SERVICE**

Full information about the aims, values, principles and practices of the EPS can be obtained from a variety of sources, including:

- the service webpage (<http://www.renfrewshire.gov.uk/webcontent/home/services/education+and+learning/information+for+parents/navigation-els-specialistsupporthomepage>);
- Service Standards for Professional Practice Guidelines (available from the Principal Psychologist); and
- leaflets for stakeholders (available from the service and on the service webpage).

## **3. SERVICE QUALITY MANAGEMENT AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

The EPS adopts a range of measures to ensure an effective, efficient and professional service for customers, stakeholders and partners. There are several components of this quality management framework:

- a coherent management structure;
- professional accountability and supervision;
- regular customer/stakeholder surveys to inform practice;
- individual staff review and development;
- staff support, CPD and induction;
- fair and equitable distribution of service to establishments;
- school-service agreements and clear service delivery protocols; and
- a structured approach to quality management and self-evaluation following national guidelines which is integrated with wider ELS development planning.

In partnership with Education Scotland, the profession is moving to a validated self evaluation (VSE) model. Renfrewshire EPS has embraced these developments and is looking forward to working with Education Scotland inspectors in the future.

The EPS also works hard to maintain quality by the provision of sector leading career progression and continuing professional development opportunities. The EPS is accredited with the British Psychological Society to support the training of EPs and the induction of probationer EPs.

## **4. SERVICE IMPROVEMENT TARGETS**

The last Standards and Quality report prepared in November 2012 reported on the period from August 2011 to August 2012. Following consultation with Education Scotland inspectors, it was agreed to move to a two year reporting cycle. Consequently, the current report provided an update on improvement targets set for the period from August 2012 to December 2014. These are set out in Appendix 1. This also includes additional targets which emerged from the June 2013 service development day and from the preparation of the EPS Improvement Plan 2014 to 2017.

## 5. SUPPLY AND DEMAND ISSUES

As evidenced by the recent parliamentary debate (see the following link:

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parliamentarybusiness/28862.aspx?r=9752>)

there are ongoing national issues about the future training and supply of educational psychologists. The ASPEP Workforce Planning Report (2013) highlights the current position across services nationally (please follow this link for an executive summary of this report: [http://www.aspep.org.uk/?page\\_id=204](http://www.aspep.org.uk/?page_id=204)).

The Workforce Planning Report (2013) highlights that a number of factors have resulted in educational psychology services across Scotland reporting a significant increase in demand at a time when numbers of educational psychologists have declined to the level they were at in 2001. These factors include:

- increased expectations regarding national priorities;
- a significant increase in additional support needs (as identified by Scottish Government data), and;
- the recommendations of the 2011 HMle Aspect Report *Educational psychology in Scotland: Making a Difference*.

The situation in Renfrewshire is more acute than in many parts of the country. Benchmarking data indicates that Renfrewshire now has one of the poorest EP to pupil population ratios in the country. Neighbouring authorities continue to be much better served. For example, in East Renfrewshire, a maingrade EP may have 4 or 5 mainstream establishments to visit, while in Renfrewshire an EP could have between 12 and 20.

	Aug 2010 – Jul 2011	Aug 2011 – Jul 2012	Aug 2012 – Jul 2013	Aug 2013 – Jul 2014
EP fte posts	11.5	8.5	8.5	8.5
No. of new Referrals	322	387	396	427

Table 1. Renfrewshire EPS supply and demand trends

Table 1 shows supply and demand trends (EP fte vs the number of new referrals) over the last 4 years. The total number of currently open cases at February 2015 was 2092, with another 3764 cases remaining “closed” in the EPS system, but with the potential to be opened at any stage.

There are no staffing shortages or recruitment issues in relation to Renfrewshire EPS and the service is currently operating with a full complement of staff. However, due to financial constraints and VR/VER the service has reduced from an FTE of 13 EPs in 2006 to 8.5 since August 2011. This staff reduction has been effected during a time of increasing demand for EP services due to a steady increase in the number of children with additional support needs. Service audit information confirms: a year-on-year increase in the number of new referrals to the service; in the number of pre-school children with additional support

needs and challenging behaviour and a significant increase in the number of children with autism or similar language and communication difficulties.

During this period the strategy has been to focus on maintaining a regular service delivery pattern to all educational establishments across Renfrewshire. However, in order to do this with a reduced number of EPs, contact time for each establishment has had to be reduced. Thus, each EP has more schools to visit and less time to visit them in. The impact of this has been varied, and has included:

- a reduction on the capacity for high quality parental liaison outwith school time;
- less time to work with parents and families of children with the most complex additional support needs;
- less time for support and “capacity building” work with teachers;
- fewer opportunities for EPs to contribute to authority-wide and whole-school developments, research and strategic development. The once sector leading research capacity of the service which was nationally recognised has been significantly reduced.

In addition, a decision was made to suspend service involvement with the Fostering and Adoption Panel and stop the consultancy service delivered to local further education Colleges as part of the “Post School Psychological Service” national developments.

Despite the capacity issues outlined above, Head of Establishment surveys indicate that the service continues to be highly valued by stakeholders.

## **6. SERVICE HIGHLIGHTS**

This report covers the period from August 2012 to December 2014. During this time, the priority has been to maintain a high quality of service delivery to educational establishments. Self-evaluation over this period provides evidence of the ongoing impact of EPS service delivery in a number of areas (see Section 7). In addition to this front-line delivery to educational establishments the service has continued to take a central role at a strategic and whole-authority level, with involvement in a number of key authority initiatives and developments. Since 2012, there has also been a slow expansion in the amount of CPD and training which EPs have provided; both on an individual establishment and whole-authority level (see Section 6.2)

### **6.1 Strategic Development and Research**

#### **Authority Validated Self Evaluation**

The authority was involved in validated self-evaluation between October 2012 and January 2013. The PEP and the two Senior EPs were involved in three groups convened to take this process forward in relation to the following themes; “Broad General Education”, “GIRFEC: Pupil Support and Planning”, and “Transitions”. This work involved the planning, implementation and analysis of a number of self-evaluation activities with the VSE context.

#### **GIRFEC / Getting it Right for Every Learner Policy**

The Principal Educational Psychologist (PEP) is a member of the GIRFEC steering group and was lead officer in the development and preparation of the “Getting it Right for Every Learner” Policy. This is the authority policy which integrates the ASL legislation with GIRFEC and the requirements of the Children and Young People Act. It was approved by board in March 2014 following extensive consultation and dialogue with “pathfinder” establishments. The policy was formally launched in October 2014. The PEP continues to be centrally involved in this policy development. Work is ongoing with further training and development work planned for the coming session. In individual establishments, EPs have been working to support effective implementation of this new policy.

The GIRFEL policy has introduced a revised staged intervention process for Renfrewshire educational establishments. Within this, a new process for identifying the needs and provisions required for children and young people with ASNs has been developed. This has been led by the ASN Manager and the PEP with support from two Senior EPs and the authority Children’s Services Support Officers. The new “Educational Placement Group Protocols” were introduced to establishments in October 2014.

#### **“Families First” Early Years Strategy**

Renfrewshire’s Early Years Strategy, known as “Families First” was approved by the Education Policy Board in March 2013. It has three strands which offer a family-centred approach to improving outcomes for children and families. These were initially to be

implemented over a two year period, running from August 2013 to March 2015. The three core strands are:

- a family-centred approach within the locality;
- a family-centred outreach approach;
- support for families with older children.

The principal educational psychologist (PEP) has led the team involved in evaluating this strategy and is responsible for overseeing the evaluation of the two locality teams being conducted by Glasgow University in addition to leading an impact evaluation for the overall strategy. The PEP works closely with the Project Manager on this and is supported in this by a research assistant and an intern. A decision has been taken to continue the strategy until 2017. The research will also continue until March 2017.

### **Dyslexia Guidance and Assessment**

A senior EP has led the development of dyslexia guidance for schools. This guidance was approved by board in March 2013. The dyslexia assessment protocol is now embedded in schools as an example of collaborative assessment in practice.

### **Autism Strategy**

The EPS has been involved in the authority's autism (ASD) forum which considers issues of common concerns across relevant ASD provision. A Senior EP has been involved in a sub-group looking at developing an ASD education strategy. In addition, the EPS was involved in the preparation of the Children's Services Partnership ASD Strategy and has representation at the ongoing ASD Strategy Monitoring Group.

A Senior EP delivers annual ASD awareness-raising to Early Years staff and, over the past session, has been part of the team developing and delivering the ASD Link training, which involves training a member of staff from each educational establishment in Renfrewshire to act as an ASD link person.

### **Nurture Strategy**

The PEP and several EPs are members of the Nurture Strategy Steering group which has been working to develop a Nurture Strategy for the authority. Two EPs have delivered training to Heads and many other EPs have delivered CPD on nurture, attachment and resilience to particular establishments and groups of staff. This involvement and commitment is ongoing.

### **Literacy**

The service has been involved in the group developing the authority's literacy strategy. Within this context, recently the service has had involvement in a three-authority Literacy Hub/Consortia-based approach to improving literacy outcomes. This has involved work with West Dunbartonshire and Inverclyde Councils. The focus has been on further development of one approach to the learning and teaching of higher order reading skills and the



development of meta-cognitive skills using Reciprocal Reading. This has been the core philosophy of the Reading Routes materials developed by West Dunbartonshire. The EPS role (PEP) has been to provide consultation on evaluation methods.

### **Self-harm and Suicide**

From December 2014 the Educational Psychology Service has been involved in multi-agency work with a number of agencies (Renfrewshire Council Children's Services – Social Work, Education Home Link Service, NHS – School Nurse Team, and the Choose Life Service Co-ordinator, Choose Life Young Person's Resource Worker) on drafting a policy for Renfrewshire Council/NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde for all professionals working with children and families in relation to self-harm and suicide. The EPS have provided a psychological perspective on the areas of self harm and suicide and used knowledge of local and national educational policies and legislation, and experience of the working in the Renfrewshire Children's Services context.

## **6.2 Training, Capacity Building, and Continuing Professional Development**

### **Capacity Building**

One of the major targets identified in the 2012 Standards and Quality report was to increase the amount of time spent by EPs on the delivery of CPD to education staff. This emerged from an analysis of the 2012 Heads survey. Since this survey, there has been a specific focus on this area of service delivery. The number of CPD seminars and training has increased steadily over the period from 2012. Figure 1 illustrates the range of CPD topics delivered by EPs since 2012. The majority of these have been delivered to individual establishments, but some have been whole authority seminars. Dyslexia, positive psychology and autism (ASD) have been the most frequently delivered subject areas.

Topics covered include:

- dyslexia;
- positive psychology;
- solution oriented practice;
- autism spectrum disorder;
- attachment;
- PAtHs;
- Bounce Back;
- behaviour management and additional support needs;
- restorative approaches in schools;
- adolescence;
- ADHD;
- "Dyscalculia";
- Emotional Intelligence;
- Differentiation – learning motivation; and,
- GIRFEL / Child's Plan.

CPD has been delivered to parents, teachers, trainee teachers, classroom assistants, nursery officers, additional support needs assistants, key workers in ASN bases.

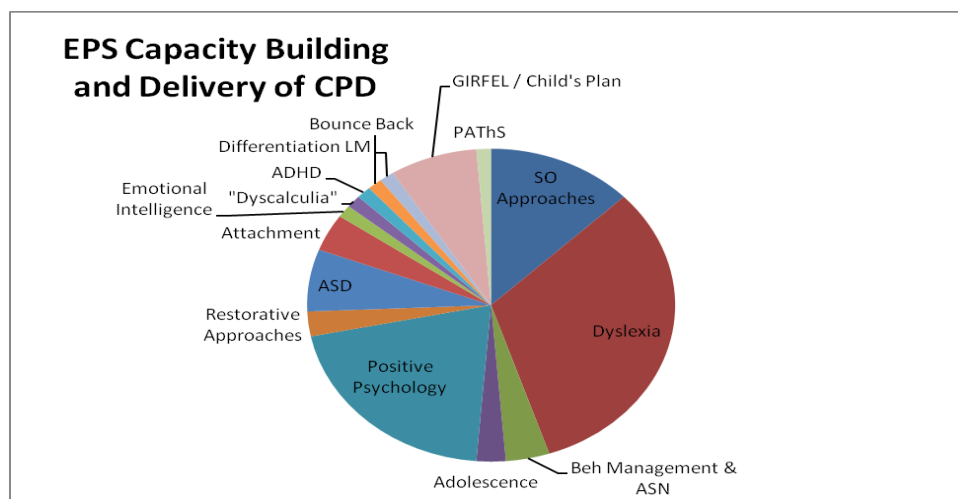


Figure 1. Range and relative incidence of CPD topics delivered by EPs since 2012

### 6.3 Service Standards and Guidance on Professional Practice

Following the service development day in June 2013, a review of this set of standards and guidance for EPs was initiated in August 2013. The new document has been developed by the EPS team over the past two sessions. The purpose of the review was to ensure rigorous, supportive and effective guidance for EPs in their daily work. The review enabled a thorough review of professional practice in order to maintain and enhance consistency of service delivery. The review also allowed reflection on core aims, values and ethical guidance.

The outcome is a new, revised and extended "Service Standards and Guidance on Professional Practice" document which serves as a service benchmark and series of protocols and standards for professional practice and service delivery. It also acts as an induction document for probationer EPs and other new staff. The document includes important revisions in the following area of practice:

- delivery of core functions;
- EP assessment practice;
- preparation of reports and written information;
- GIRFEC and GIRFEL staged intervention;
- Child Protection;
- early years children;
- liaison with SCRA/Children's Hearings;
- out-of-authority work and cross boundary protocols; and,
- staff safety.

## 7. HEAD OF ESTABLISHMENT SURVEY

A survey of head teachers and heads of centre views of the EPS was carried out between May 2014 and September 2015 using the online Survey Monkey resource. The Heads of all 78 establishments in Renfrewshire were invited to complete the survey (primary schools, secondary schools, pre-five centres, and special pre-five centres and schools). A total of 65 replied giving a response rate of 83%.

### 7.1 Service Delivery Satisfaction Outcomes

In the survey, each Head was asked to provide satisfaction ratings in relation to the service as a whole and five service delivery areas (consultation and advice, assessment and intervention, professional development and training, research and strategic development, and multi-agency working). Access to the service is also reported. Figure 2 and Table 2 below indicate the number of Heads who responded in the “very satisfied” and “satisfied” response category for these areas

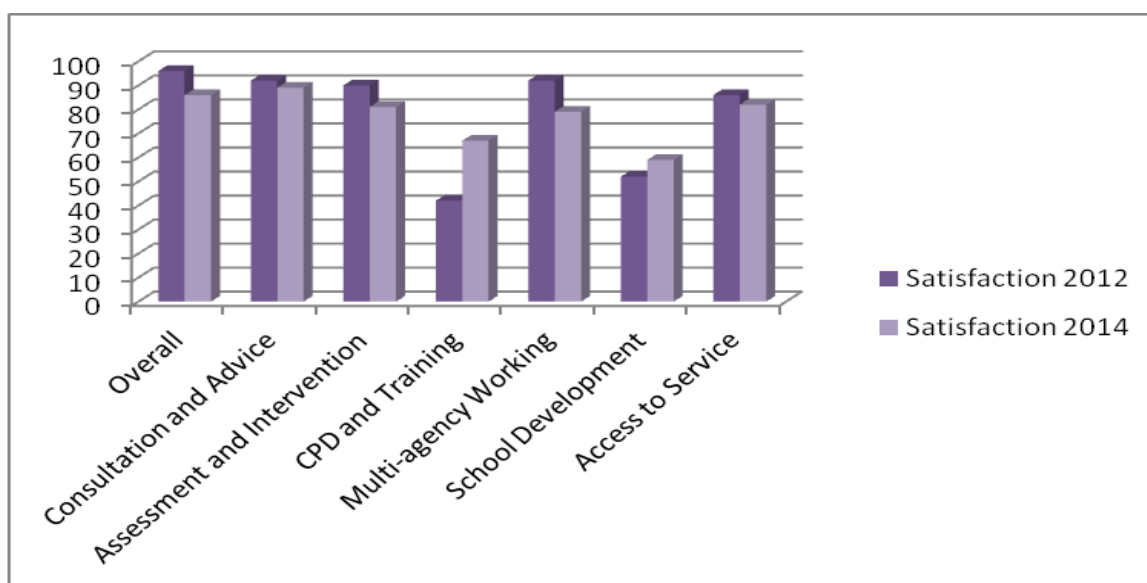


Figure 2. Comparison of Head's satisfaction ratings 2012 vs 2014

#### Overall Quality of Service

It can be seen that reported satisfaction with service delivery while remaining high at 86% has dipped slightly from the 2012 figure of 96%. Most Heads reported that they receive a “very high standard of service”, and praised staff for compiling “excellent reports”, “researching strategies” and delivering “in service workshops”. A strong theme to emerge was a desire for increased input and time allocation from the EPS. While most are satisfied with the quality of service, there are concerns about the “quantity” of service delivery. For example:

*“I think the EPS is doing a great job in very difficult circumstances. More EPs and time allocation needed. Those with the purse strings need to take heed; if we are serious about*

*mainstream with support for all children then this has to be properly resourced. If we do not do this we will fail our children”*

*“We receive a very high standard of service”*

*“Insufficient time with Ed Psych for the size of the school and meeting pupils’ needs”*

*“I feel that every school would benefit from more input – the service, like all services, has been whittled away to almost a bare minimum”*

*“Very positive contribution. Has worked worth staff, researching strategies and approaches...”*

*“Very satisfied with the quality of service, just feel that time allocation is not sufficient to support growing demands”*

<b>Question</b>	<b>2014 (2012)</b>
How satisfied are you with the quality of service provided by EPS?	86% (96%)
How satisfied are you with consultation and advice from the EPS?	89% (92%)
How satisfied are you with the assessment and intervention provided by the EPS?	81% (90%)
How satisfied are you with the professional development and training provided by the EPS?	67% (42%)
How satisfied are you with the whole-school development provided by the EPS?	59% (52%)
How satisfied are you with the arrangements in place for multi-agency working with the EPS?	79% (92%)
How satisfied are you with the timeliness of service delivery?	55%
How satisfied are you with information provided by the EPS about the service?	89%
How satisfied are you with access to the service	82% (86%)
How responsive is the EPS to complaints and feedback about service delivery?	70%
Do you feel the EP works in partnership with you regarding service planning and joint decision making?	94%

Table 2: Responses about satisfaction with EPS service delivery

6% of respondents rated the service as dissatisfactory, with a couple of head teachers suggesting there is a lack of consistency between EPs, which is reflected in the nature of service delivery across establishments. This has been followed up with the PEP attending two primary Heads meetings to listen to and discuss issues of concern. The issue of

consistency is currently being addressed within the service within the context of a review of "Service Standards and Professional Practice".

### **Consultation and Advice**

The large majority of Heads (89%) reported being satisfied or very with the consultation and advice provided by the service. Consultations were described as 'effective' and advice as being 'excellent' and of 'exceptionally high standard'. 8% were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied with the quality of consultation and advice offered, perhaps reflective of the issue of time constraints with the EP. Two Heads reported dissatisfaction (3%) in that the advice from their EP was 'not always helpful'.

It is interesting to consider the trend in Heads' satisfaction with the consultation and advice provided by the service over the past 7 years since 2007. While satisfaction ratings remain high, there has been a year on year decline in satisfaction ratings since 2010. This coincides with the reduction in EP numbers which suggests that it is related to Heads' concerns that more EP input is required in this area. Despite this, most comments provided were positive:

*"We have effective consultation and receive appropriate, knowledgeable advice".*

*"Valuable source of information and advice, provides information on recent research etc. Contributes to future planning and systems development".*

*"Our EP is excellent however the amount of time is not sufficient".*

### **Assessment and Intervention**

The majority of Heads (81%) rated the quality of assessment and intervention provided by the EPS, as satisfactory (37%) or very satisfactory (44%). Heads described assessment and interventions as "appropriate and effective" and explained that assessments have helped to reassure parents. The time constraints of EPs were again recognised, as some Heads suggested more time "getting to know/assessing the children" would be beneficial.

While a current rating of 81% is very good, the satisfaction trend over the past 7 years indicates an uneven downward trend since 2010. Heads comments are generally positive but reflect this trend. There is also recognition that there are more children and young people with additional support need who require assessment and intervention:

*"...What is done is super, but more time is needed for increasing case loads. Children are having to wait too long for assessment in many cases".*

*"Appropriate and effective intervention in relation to a pupil with complex needs".*

*"Assessment and intervention is of very high quality. Feedback from parents indicates high satisfaction levels also".*

*"Our EP is limited by the short time allocation she has in school".*

## **Professional Development and Training**

With regard to the quality of professional development and training provided by the EPS, 26% were very satisfied and 41% satisfied. This is an increase in satisfaction since the last survey in 2012 and is evidence of the impact the service has made to increase the amount of CPD delivered to educational establishments. Heads reported that psychologists provided 'very helpful development for staff' and 'superb' approaches to training which are 'excellent and well received' by staff. 5 % were dissatisfied but again often the recurring theme of limited time was relevant here. Additionally, some Heads were unable to respond to this question due to not having accessed these aspects of the service.

The 7 years satisfaction trend in this area of service delivery is very encouraging. While a number of schools are still not requesting this type of service, surveys show a steady improving trend since 2011 which demonstrates that the service has achieved its improvement target of increased delivery of CPD and Training. Some quotes illustrate this:

*"Received good training on attachment and dyslexia to whole staff".*

*"We also approached your service to provide further staff training that we have been unable to access through CPD. You were able to develop training that was relevant and appropriate to our needs".*

*"There has been no time for this aspect of the role".*

*"Recent input during in-service was excellent".*

## **Research and Strategic Development**

44% of Heads were satisfied with the quality of research and strategic development provided by the EPS, with 15% of those stating the quality was very satisfactory. 51% felt they were unable to comment on this question, selecting the neither/nor option. It was explained that this was not relevant to them and some explained the EP does not contribute to whole-school development. A further 5% of Heads were dissatisfied with the quality of whole-school development provided by the EPS. Some made comments regarding the time allocation of EPs, as whole-school development would impact on the time available for work with parents and children. Despite these comments, the 7 year satisfaction rating overview indicates an encouraging positive trend in satisfaction with this aspect of the service. From a low point of 32% in 2011, there has been a year on year increase in Head's satisfaction rating for this aspect of service delivery, which now sits at 59%.

## **Multi-Agency Working**

39% of Heads are very satisfied, and 40% of Heads are satisfied with the arrangements in place for multi-agency working with the EPS. Some stated the "EPS provides an excellent service for multi-agency working" and the "EP contributes effectively to the school EST". 8% of Heads selected the neither/nor option and the remaining 13% were dissatisfied with the multi-agency working arrangements. Head teachers reported the difficulties of working around the timetable of EPs and explained "it is extremely difficult to arrange multi-agency

meetings as everyone is so stretched". Some head teachers also commented that the limited time EPs have with schools means the "time allocation no longer allows attendance at monthly EST meetings". The satisfaction rating of 79% is lower than the rating obtained in the 2012 survey and seems due to the factors described above rather than a reduction in the quality of multi-agency working by EPs.

### **Timeliness of Service Delivery**

18% of Heads reported being very satisfied and 37% said they were satisfied with the timeliness of service delivery, some commenting that 'excellent service' is provided in the allocated time and there is 'prompt feedback'. EP time management is 'good' but that more time and access to their EP is desirable. These time constraints may contribute to 26% of Heads answering that they are neither satisfied nor dissatisfied with timeliness of service delivery. 16% were dissatisfied and 3% very dissatisfied with the timeliness of the service but were keen to highlight that often this is 'not a reflection of time management of the EP' but instead the time allocation to their school:

*"There is always a quick response to enquiries via email and despite the point made about time allocations, an excellent service is provided in that limited time"*

*"A guaranteed time line for meetings and professional dialogue is consistent and ensures an effective planning process".*

### **Access to the Service**

82% of Heads are very satisfied (26%) or satisfied (56%) with access to the service. Accessibility was described as "excellent" and "EPs are available for consultation and advice" via telephone and email. 13% of Heads selected the neither/nor option and 5% were dissatisfied with access to the service. Most comments made suggested more time with EPs and more input would be desirable.

72% of Heads were satisfied with telephone contact with the service. Office staff were described as 'very helpful', 'efficient and friendly' and acting 'professionally'. EPs were reported to 'return calls ASAP' although a recurring theme is that Heads tend to communicate with their EP through email rather than telephone, perhaps accounting for the 28% who reported being neither satisfied nor dissatisfied.

### **Responsiveness to Complaints and Feedback**

45% of Heads reported the EPS to be very responsive regarding complaints and feedback about service delivery and 25% believed the EPS to be responsive, noting they have 'positive relationships that make feedback easy to discuss' or have had no reason to complain about the EPS. No Heads believed the EPS to be unresponsive or very unresponsive, many noting they had never had to complain and they 'do not often receive feedback about the EPS'.

## 7.2 Impact of EPS Service Delivery “What difference does the EPS make?”

Heads were asked to comment on the impact of the EPS under a number of categories. (Where percentages do not meet 100, the remaining percentage gave comments that were neither positive nor negative)

### Impact on Head and Senior Managers

The main themes arising from this question included; the provision of support strategies, advice and direction, support in helping to identify specific needs and how to seek help, raising awareness of recent relevant research. Figure 7 shows these main themes in response to the question, “What difference does the EPS make to Heads and Senior Managers?”

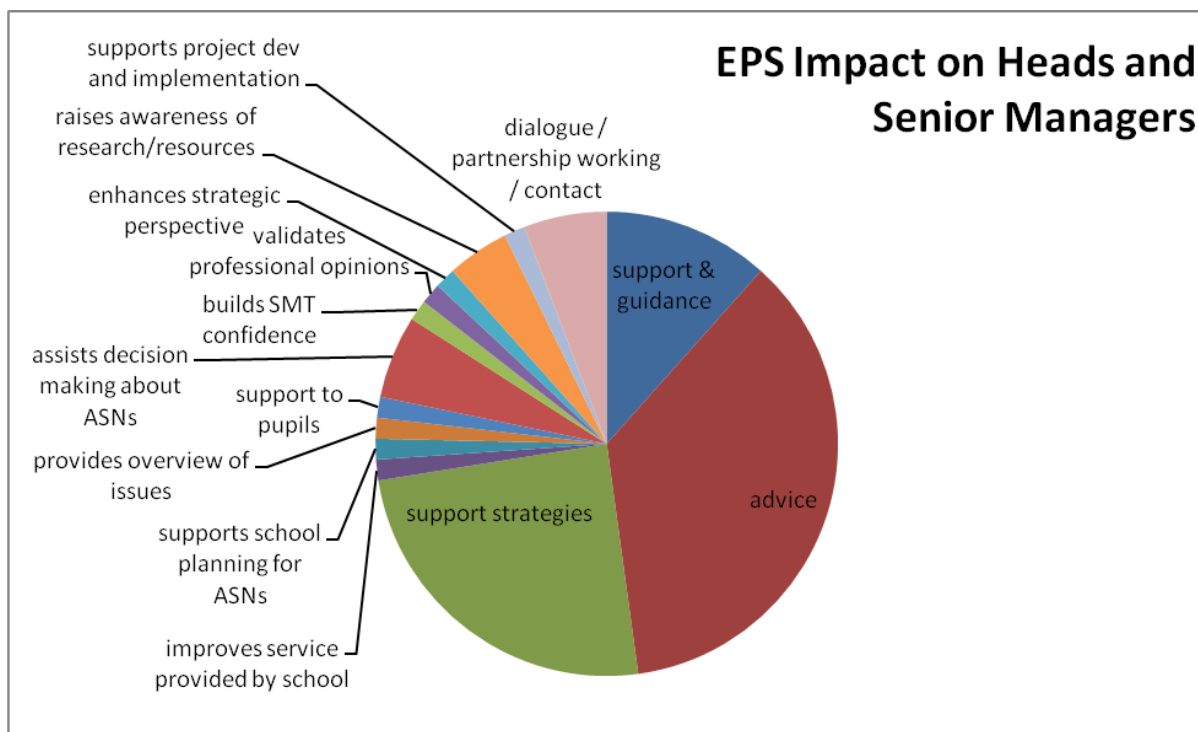


Figure 3. “What difference does the EPS make to Heads and Senior Managers?”

### Impact on Children and Young People

Figure 4 show the main themes in response to the question, “What difference does the EPS make to Children and Young People?” The majority of Heads (93%) felt that the EPS made a positive difference to children and young people. The EPS was reported to provide ‘support’, ‘guidance’, and ‘assessment’ to help children overcome their difficulties and ultimately lead to ‘better outcomes for learners’. Only 2 Heads (4%) reported the EPS’s difference to children and young people to be ‘limited’ but no further detail was given as to why this was the case.



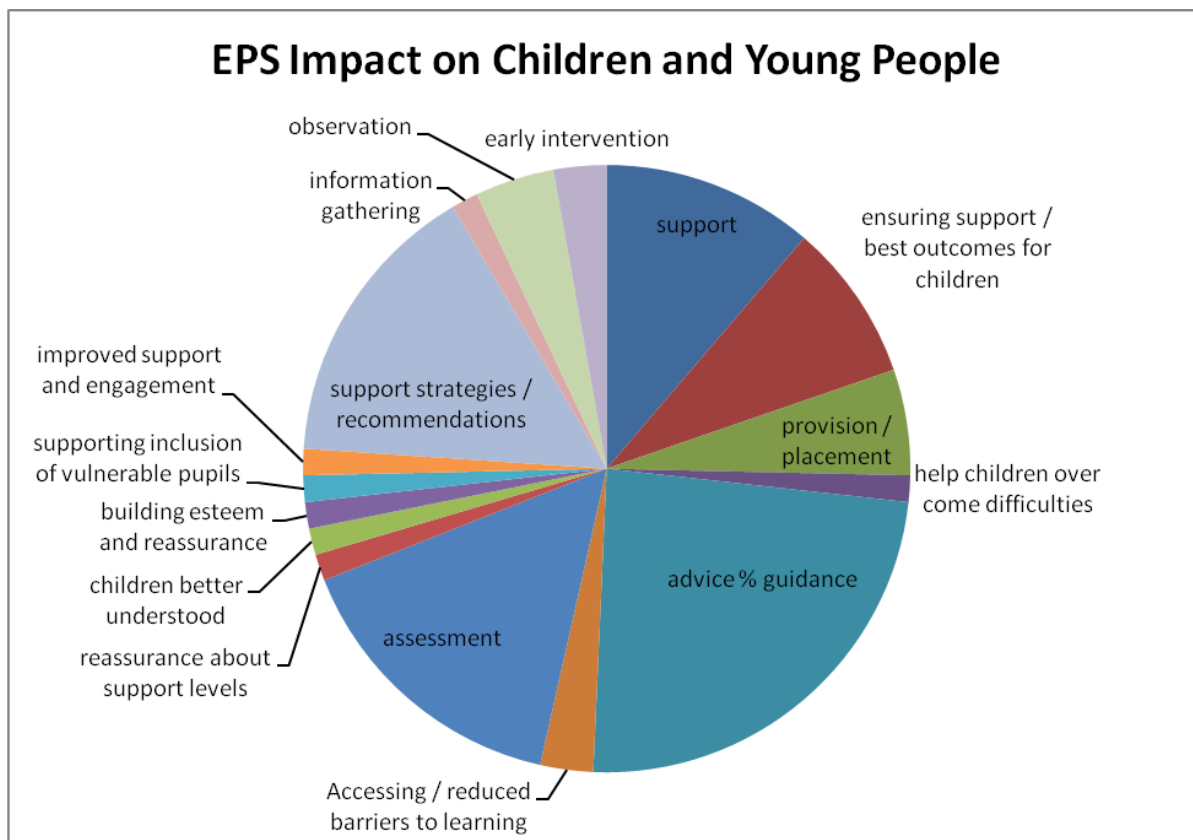


Figure 4. “What difference does the EPS make to Children and Young People?”

### Impact on Staff

Figure 5 show the main themes in response to the question, “What difference does the EPS make to staff?” Most Heads reported the EPS to make a positive difference to staff (84%) believing these positive differences included impacting ‘self confidence’, providing ‘support’, ‘information and advice’, ‘strategies and resources’ for staff to use and ‘reassurance’. 8% felt the EPS made limited or no difference to staff but did not elaborate on this further.

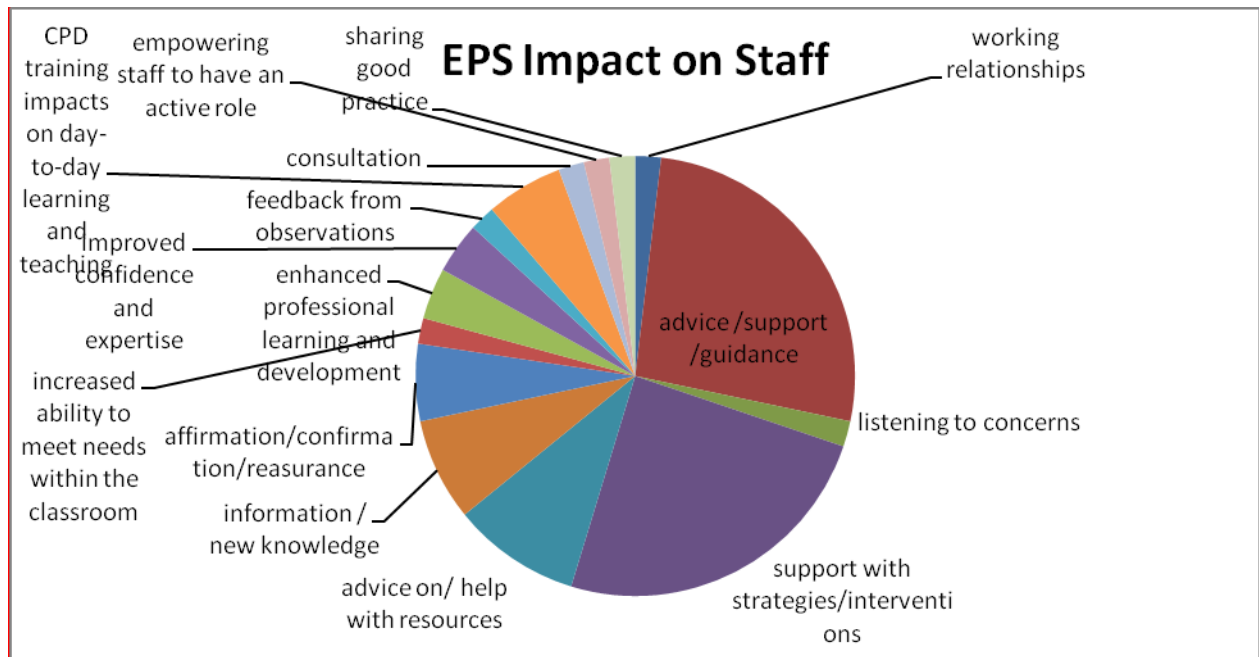


Figure 5. “What difference does the EPS make to staff?”

### Impact on Parents

Figure 6 shows the themes in response to the question, “What difference does the EPS make to Parents?” 92% of Heads reported that they believed the EPS made a positive difference to parents in that the EPS provided parents with ‘advice on strategies’, ‘information’ to ‘help parents to understand the difficulties their child might have’, as well as ‘what can be done to support them’. A recurring theme was that the EPS provided ‘reassurance’ to parents that the ‘needs of their child are being met’. Again, only a few Heads reported that they did not believe the EPS to make a positive difference to parents (4%) but did not give reasons for this response.

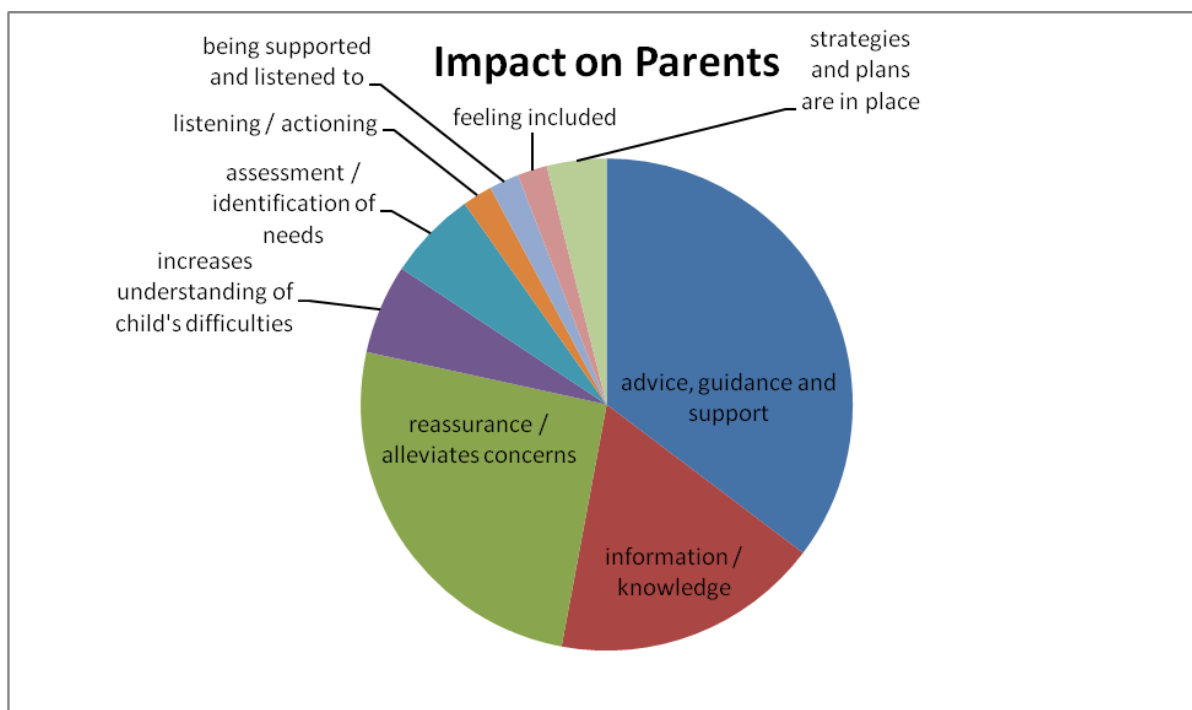


Figure 6. "What difference does the EPS make to Parents?"

### Impact of Casework with Individual Children

Most heads commented on the positive impact of assessment and intervention with individual children. This work was described as "very valuable", "excellent" and "highly effective". Heads felt the casework with individual children helps "reduce barriers to learning" and "helps parents understand and support their children". Overall Heads reported that assessment and intervention lead to "better outcomes for the child, ensuring the right supports are in place", which is especially effective at times of transition. Some head teachers commented that more time for assessment and intervention would be beneficial, as it would allow EPs to get to know children better.

### Impact of Advice and Consultation

Heads commented that advice and consultation to staff on general matters and approaches was "helpful", "valued highly" and "very worthwhile", leading to "more skilled and confident practitioners". Some Heads felt advice and consultation to staff was "limited" mostly due to time constraints and advice was "not always practical".

### Impact of Professional Development and Training for Staff

Heads stating that the professional development and training delivered by EPs was "very valuable", "thought-provoking" and "very well received". Staff were seen to "build knowledge and understanding" and "increase confidence". Head teachers stated the following training was delivered to schools:

- dyslexia;
- positive psychology;
- solution focused approaches;
- emotional literacy; and
- attachment.

Some Heads had not arranged for formal staff training and development to take place, due to time constraints.

### **Impact of Research and Whole-School Developments**

Most Heads did not think research and whole-school developments were relevant to their establishment. However, the following examples of research and whole-school developments were provided:

- new approaches to learning and teaching in P1, by focussing on learning through play;
- working with project leaders on differentiation; and
- initiating the Bounce Back and PATHS programmes.

### **Additional Comments**

Recurring themes under this question included Heads praising the EPS for good support, good relationships with school staff and reiterating how 'delighted' they were with the service provided. The main issue raised was that of time allocation, with many Head Teachers desiring more of the EP time. Overall the large majority of comments from Heads were very positive.

## **8. PARENT SURVEY**

Following the 2012 standards and quality report, a review of the parent survey process was carried out. For some time the service had obtained parents' views using a telephone survey method conducted by business support staff. However, there was concern that this approach placed staff in a potentially difficult situation if a parent had a concern about a particular EP. There was also concern about the validity of responses using this method.

Consequently, a decision was made to move to a biannual postal questionnaire survey. The parents of children and young people referred to the service over three periods were included. The survey was completed by end June 2014 for inclusion in the current report. From the total number of parents/carers in each time period 1/3 were randomly contacted by email, Survey Monkey or Letter. The letter contained a survey questionnaire and gave the option of a telephone interview.

Unfortunately, using this new method only 6 questionnaires were completed and returned from the 40 which were sent out. It was not therefore possible to report on the parent survey in this report. The plan is to return to a telephone interviews for future parent surveys.

## **9. CONCLUSION**

This report presents an overview of the development of Renfrewshire Educational Psychology Service between 2012 and 2014. The overarching theme continues to be that described in the 2012 Standards and Quality. Thus, despite increasing demands and a challenging operating context, there is evidence that the EPS continues to provide a high quality service to customers and stakeholders. Evidence of impact is strong and this reflects the continuing hard work and commitment of the EPS team.

Demands for service input continue at all levels of service delivery and in addition to the ongoing demand from educational establishments, there is a continuing requirement for the service to contribute to strategic authority priorities such as GIRFEC, Early Years, Nurture. It is essential that the service continues to maintain an effective balance between front line service delivery to educational establishments and involvement in strategic priorities. In this endeavour a realistic understanding of service capacity is essential.

The service has much to offer within the new Renfrewshire Children's Services context. The priority will continue to be the delivery of a high quality front-line service to educational establishments. In addition, it is hoped that the new authority context will facilitate more effective partnership working for the benefit of Renfrewshire children and their families.

In terms of external scrutiny, educational psychology services in Scotland are now moving into a validated self-evaluation context. Future service quality management reporting and self-evaluation activity will reflect this development as we anticipate that the service will be required to undergo validated self-evaluation at some stage after March 2016.

Michael E Harker  
Principal Educational Psychologist  
April 2015

## Appendix 1. Standards & Quality Improvement Targets for 2014 to 2017

S&Q Improvement Targets (November 2012)	Status March 2015
1. Maintain the continuing high service delivery satisfaction ratings of parents who use the service.	Evaluation deferred
2. Maintain the high service delivery satisfaction ratings of Heads	Achieved but reduced (86% v 96%)
3. Increase the amount of time spent by EPs on delivery of CPD to education staff.	achieved
4. Finalise and roll-out the new “Collaborative Dyslexia Assessment” protocol in all schools across the Authority.	Achieved August 2013
5. Ensure that all EPs are trained to deliver the Triple P parenting programme	Decision not to proceed December 2012
6. Continue to explore ways to independently measure the specific contribution and impact of EPs within multi-agency forums such as EST.	Ongoing
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Actions from REPS Improvement Plan 2014 – 2017</b></p> <p>7. To support ELS Children’s Services in the planning for, and implementation of the provisions of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Bill, when enacted in particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• GIRFEC</li> <li>• Getting it Right for Every Learner Policy (GIRFEL)</li> <li>• Children’s rights;</li> <li>• GIRFEC; and</li> <li>• Corporate parenting.</li> </ul>	<p>PEP is a member of the RCSP GIRFEC steering group and was lead officer in the development of the GIRFEL policy which was rolled out across the authority in October 2014.</p> <p>EPs are involved at an establishment level</p>

<p>8. Continue to support the implementation of Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC)</p>	<p>Ongoing: PEP (strategic) EPs (establishments)</p>
<p>9. Support to the authority and educational establishments for learners at risk of exclusion with poor attendance and low attainment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contribute to the revised “better relationships policy”</li> <li>• EP contributions to nurture approaches</li> <li>• EP direct work in schools within ESTs</li> <li>• EP direct casework with children and YP</li> <li>• EP attendance at LAC reviews &amp; IA meetings</li> <li>• Other service delivery across 5 core functions as required</li> </ul>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>PEP, CB/SM</p> <p>EPs</p>
<p>10. Continue to support authority approaches to child protection:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contribute to single-agency and self-evaluation exercises;</li> <li>• Contribute to reviews and improved approaches to annual update of Standard Circular 57.</li> </ul>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>PEP &amp; SEP</p>
<p>11. Improve outcomes for looked after and vulnerable children and young people (LAC):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to support establishments approaches to supporting LAC</li> <li>• Lead monitoring of LAC in other authority areas who have additional support needs</li> <li>• Contribute, as appropriate, to CPD for staff working with LAC.</li> </ul>	<p>Ongoing PEP /EPs</p>
<p>12. Continue to contribute to the implementation of the early years strategy (Families First), specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Management of evaluation of the strategy</li> <li>• support to develop reporting tools for EYC workstream 3.</li> </ul>	<p>Ongoing PEP</p>
<p><b>Service Priorities emerging from June 2013 Self-Evaluation Review</b></p>	
<p>13. Review of Service Standards for Professional Practice to ensure rigorous, supportive and effective guidance for EPs</p>	<p>Ongoing PEP, due March 2015</p>

14. Pilot PEP Shadowing / EP Observation within VSE context	Ongoing PEP/EPs June 2015
15. Introduce Case Discussion Forum approach	Introduced August 2014, currently being reviewed All EPs
16. Inform Education Manager and Head of Service about issues arising for service delivery from “Cluster of Complaints” exercise	PEP completed October 2014



