



Falkirk Council
Education Services



EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY SERVICE



Standards and Quality Report
2006/07

Foreword



This is the first Standards and Quality Report for Falkirk Council Educational Psychology Service.

All Scottish Local Authorities are required to provide an educational psychology service and following its inspection by HM Inspectors of Education the Service is pleased to offer this report.

A national review of the provision of educational psychology services in Scotland in 2002 identified five key roles for services:

- **assessment**
- **intervention**
- **consultation**
- **research**
- **training and development**

A summary of achievement for each of these areas is provided in the body of this report.

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Introduction



The Educational Psychology Service aims to improve life-long outcomes for children, young people and families by applying psychology to educational contexts.

It is part of Education Services, and is led by the Principal Educational Psychologist who reports to the Head of Educational Support.

The service provides consultation and advice mainly about school based or education issues to all educational establishments in the council area from pre school to students in further and higher education.

Stakeholders who use the service range from parents and carers, senior officers of the authority, school staff, children and young people, colleagues from Housing and Social Work Services and Forth Valley Health Board.

The Service is currently based in two offices and it will combine to one office in a new location in August 2008. This will be a key development and significant improvement for the Service and has been a priority area for action.

Any service is only as good as its personnel and Falkirk Council Educational Psychology Service continues to attract highly qualified, able recruits who join a group of experienced chartered educational psychologists supported by excellent clerical staff. Trainee educational psychologists from Dundee and Strathclyde Universities are based with the Service for one or two years.

Resources

Budget: £930,000

Staff:	Educational Psychologists	13
	Clerical Staff	4
	Trainee Educational Psychologists	2

Assessment, Intervention and Consultation



The work of educational psychologists is founded on work with teachers, pupils and parents. This casework involves assessing what is working to help pupils learn at school.

Educational psychologists work with other colleagues as well as teachers, parents and pupils. We work with social workers, speech and language therapists, clinical psychologists, paediatricians and psychiatrists.

Educational psychologists assess with others, what the nature or extent of problems are. They advise on actions that may improve a child's learning, may improve matters at home or may assist teachers.

Educational psychologists' time is highly valued by schools in Falkirk. As well as carrying out assessment and intervention around individual cases, teachers and others consult with educational psychologists on classroom management strategies, child protection concerns, educational research and other matters.

This expert consultancy allows educational psychologists to give strategic advice often working to support classes and groups of pupils as well as individuals.

The Educational Psychology Service evaluates all the work it carries out as part of its commitment to continuous improvement. A dedicated working group designs, collates and

monitors self-evaluation activities for the Service. The Service works on a three year cycle of self evaluation which covers the entire range of its activities with young people, parents and carers, educational establishments, other agencies, trainee, educational psychologists and senior managers within Education Services.

Schools in Falkirk are asked each year to rate the service they have received. Parents and young people are also asked for feedback about the Educational Psychology Service's support.

Colleagues from other agencies in health and social work have given us very helpful feedback on how we can improve our service and where it is working effectively. All the training we deliver is evaluated and our own work is open to scrutiny and review by other educational psychologists.

Formal service level agreements are in place with the Reporter to the Childrens Panel, with Forth Valley Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services and are under development with Forth Valley Speech and Language Therapy Service and with Falkirk Council Housing and Social Work Services.

All schools at the beginning of each academic session negotiate a practice agreement with their educational psychologist and this is reviewed at the end of each session.

During the academic session 2006/07 the Educational Psychology Service conducted three strands of its cycle of self-evaluation. These were a questionnaire to all Educational Psychology Service staff, a structured interview with members of Education Services Senior Management and a questionnaire to Social Work colleagues.

Areas of Strength

Areas of strength coming from the Educational Psychology Service's self evaluation of Assessment, Intervention and Consultation and the HMIe inspection cover three themes -

1. external stakeholder satisfaction
2. relationships with key partners
3. perceived impact of the service

1. External Stakeholder Satisfaction

80% of educational establishments stated that they were 'very satisfied' with the service that they had received, with 96% being satisfied overall. From the information collected by HM Inspectors 87% of school respondents felt that their educational psychologist contributed effectively to collaborative working practices in school. 88% of parents responding to HM Inspectors felt both that the educational psychologist took time to listen to their views and that the input of the educational psychologist was helpful.

2. Relationships with Key Partners

During the session 2006/07 the Educational Psychology Service was rated



Falkirk Council Educational Psychology Service Staff

by a sample of senior managers in education services for communication, advice and clarity of roles. 100% of senior managers surveyed strongly agreed that there was effective communication between the Educational Psychology Service and senior management team, that the advice they received was of a high quality and that roles are clearly defined and support the work of Education Services.

An initial baseline questionnaire with Social Work Children and Families Team members revealed generally positive working relations as one theme.

A joint development day with Social Work Children and Families Team managers led

to a significant rise in positive perceptions of relationships and understanding of each others' roles.

3. Perceived Impact of the Service

Educational psychologists were believed to have had a high impact in multi-agency meetings and meetings with parents by 84% of school staff.

Over three-quarters of school staff felt that consultation with an educational psychologist about individual pupils had a positive impact.



Research



One of the working groups within the Educational Psychology Service has a remit to stimulate monitor and conduct research on behalf of the authority.

Current projects include an authority-wide study of engagement with learning of secondary age pupils,

www.falkirk.gov.uk/services/education/information_for_parents/PDFs/engagement_with_learning.pdf,

a smaller scale piece of work focussing on effective interventions to improve attendance in two secondary schools and work with the Authority on its strategy for promoting literacy. These all link directly to key priorities for Education Services.

The Service is fortunate to have trainees from each of the two Scottish training courses placed with the Service each year. As part of their requirements for completing a Masters level dissertation, trainees conduct a piece of research while working in the Service.

The latest of these focuses on the use of transition forms developed by the service for use with Forth Valley College, Careers Scotland and local training providers.

Transition forms are a way of collecting information for school leavers on one form. This form can be used to help applications to Forth Valley College, local training providers and the Careers Service.

Larbert High 'Psychology for Life' Day - January 2008



Training, Development and Project Work



The Service makes a significant investment in training, development and project work for school staff and colleagues from other agencies. This work is evaluated rigorously. Data is gathered about the knowledge participants have gained, as well as behavioural and organisational change that has occurred. The Service aims to respond to the differing needs of individual establishments, to colleagues in other agencies as well as centrally identified authority needs for training and development.

Training and Development

Training and development offered to stakeholders covers a wide variety of subject areas and is highly rated by participants. Of those who took part in training delivered by the Educational Psychology Service, 97% thought they had learned from and enjoyed the session. HM Inspectors noted the extensive range of staff development delivered by the Educational Psychology Service. Activities included those negotiated with schools as well as particular requests from the Authority such as input into the probationer teachers' training programme.

97% of participants in staff development over the year had enjoyed the sessions and felt it had increased their knowledge. 94% felt it had aided reflection upon their job and 88% stated

that the training would impact upon how they carried out their job. A sample were questioned six months after the training sessions. Of these 95% stated that they had used what they had learnt during the sessions.

The Service has delivered separate courses for education staff, staff from other agencies, parents and school pupils.

Almost all participants, 92.5%, in the long-term evaluation of staff development work conducted six months earlier, stated that there had been a positive impact upon pupils, as a result of their attendance at the training conducted by the Educational Psychology Service. Further details can be found at

www.hmie.gov.uk

Project Work

The service ran three major projects in 2006-2007 - Managing School Projects, Psychology for Life and Vygotsky in the Early Years.

Managing School Projects

Managing School Projects is an initiative which trains school staff to manage projects in their own schools. It has been running in Falkirk since 2002. It has been rigorously evaluated and shown to impact on pupils, teachers and schools themselves.

It is offered to the Authority's primary and secondary schools. The current theme for schools is resilience and well-being. Previous themes for the initiative have included children's play. Over half of the primary schools in Falkirk and four secondary schools have taken part in this initiative which has been highlighted by HMI Inspectors as an example of good practice.

All staff involved in the two Managing School Project programmes running during 2006-07 were able to point to gains in their knowledge and skills.

"I feel my communication/ presentation skills improved as a direct result of this project"

and

"an important step in my role as Principal Teacher".

Positive outcomes through Managing School Projects for pupils included more settled pupils, the development of social skills and from the long-term study conducted this year of the 2002 project, better pupil to pupil relationships and pupils more active at playtimes. General impact included pupils being more participative in school life.

More detailed information is available at www.hmie.gov.uk

Psychology for Life

Psychology for Life is a rolling series of conferences for sixth year pupils. The conferences promote the resilience and well-being of young people about to make the

transition from school to work, training, higher or further education. Workshops offered to pupils include social competence, problem solving, managing stress, positive thinking, confident communication, personal planning, conflict resolution and happiness and well-being.

Participant sixth year students in "Psychology for Life" conferences rated the quality of the input on average as an 8 where 10 is high and 1 is low. 96% of participants in one school and 100% in another said that they would recommend it to other pupils.

Pupils rated as 8 (out of 10) their chances of using something they had learned.

More information is available at:

www.hmie.gov.uk

Vygotsky in The Early Years

The Vygotsky in Early Years Project is a collaborative venture between Curriculum Support in Education Services, the Educational Psychology Service and practitioners from 13 educational establishments.

The focus of the project is to use the theories of Lev Vygotsky who recognised the importance of social interaction in children's learning and development. Staff in early years establishments have had training and support in the Vygotskian theory and practice. Staff involved in the Vygotsky in the Early Years Project felt it had increased the quality of the adult to child interactions and helped them better focus upon strategies for children.

Children participating in the Vygotsky in the Early Years project were observed to be more engaged in their activities, their concentration skills were seen to increase over time and they were observed to be using their symbolic learning in other parts of the nursery. They were more knowledgeable about colour, shape and size at an earlier time in the sessions in comparison to previous years.

Training for Educational Psychologists

As well as training and development for others, the service meets some of its own training needs for educational psychologists and support staff through the work of an internal continuing professional development group.

The group designs and delivers training that meets needs from individuals' professional development plans and local and national priorities.

Mental Health and Wellbeing

The service has established a national profile with work it is conducting and supporting in the field of mental health and wellbeing. The service is working with the national charity Young Minds to deliver a project promoting the resilience of pupils in the Denny Cluster in the transition from primary to secondary school. The first delivery of training in infant observation, which is part of the Scottish Infant Mental Health Project, was delivered in Falkirk and supported by the Educational Psychology Service.



Post School Services



Post School Services

In 2004 Falkirk Council Education Services made a successful bid to the Scottish Executive for funding of a pathfinder Post-School Educational Psychology Service.

This service includes partnership working with secondary schools, education services, Forth Valley College, Careers Scotland, local training providers and the Lifelong Learning Directorate of Scottish Government.

Much of the work of this part of the Educational Psychology Service aims to support the positive transition of Falkirk's school leavers and to sustain them in positive destinations. A small working group within the service supports both local and national priorities

around the agenda of More Choices and More Chances for our school leavers.

The Educational Psychology Service offers advice and support to a number of strategic groups linking education services, Forth Valley College, Careers Scotland, local training providers and schools. Funding has recently been confirmed by Scottish Government until 2011.

This service has been externally evaluated by strategic officers from Scottish Government. Local and national findings were very positive. Educational psychologists were shown to have a significant impact in the delivery of training, working with stakeholders to develop a transition form and individual casework consultation.

Continuous Improvement



From its own self evaluation and from a recent inspection by HMle the Educational Psychology Service has identified five areas of work where we need to improve.

These are:

- 1) involving our stakeholders in Service planning;
- 2) continuing to work on key partnerships;
- 3) managing quality assurance and consistency;
- 4) having a more rigorous approach to evaluating our work; and
- 5) communicating our roles and functions to all stakeholders.

1. Involving Stakeholders in Service Planning

We intend to improve stakeholder involvement with the formation of a new working group with broad stakeholder representation, focus groups with young people and the wide distribution of this Standards and Quality Report.

The governance group is being implemented to advise on the review, development and improvement of the service. One of the service's depute

principals is leading the development of a focus group specifically targeted at young people who have worked with an educational psychologist and are willing to give feedback on the service they have received.

2. Developing Key Partnership

We will continue to work to develop partnership working with support from our stakeholder working group. In our questionnaire study with Social Work colleagues two comments were made about variety of practice. New management review procedures detailed below under Managing Quality Assurance have now been put into place as this was also a recommendation from HMle. HM Inspectors noted the steps being taken to develop partnership working. HM Inspectors detailed that the service has developed very good working relationships within the authority and was working on its capacity to impact upon the key priorities of the authority.

3. Managing Quality Assurance

The theme of managing quality assurance and consistency is key for the service.

In the evaluation of the Educational Psychology Service conducted by HM Inspectors of education in 2007 one finding was that a few parents and families felt that the quality of service was variable across the authority.

HM Inspectors were aware of a comprehensive range of guidance and practice for practitioners but it was not clear how the delivery of services by educational psychologists was monitored in relation to these procedures and guidelines.

A system of management reviews four times per year has been implemented for each educational psychologist. These reviews monitor adherence to practice guidelines and procedures and include casefile evaluation, work-shadowing and the delivery of training and development.

These new procedures have been welcomed by educational psychologists as an opportunity to demonstrate the range of activities in which they are involved.

Feedback on these systems and procedures are evaluated by staff during staff development activities where other matters relating to stakeholders are built into annual reviews of policy and procedures.

4. Evaluation of Services

HM Inspectors noted that although the Educational Psychology Service had self-

evaluation activities embedded in its practice more work was needed to monitor the quality of research and training activities of the service.

A need to embed both impact and outcome measures for children and young people was also highlighted. The Service now evaluates each piece of training and development it delivers looking specifically at satisfaction, knowledge gain and individual or organisational impact.

Evaluation is collated centrally by senior managers. Each educational psychologist undertakes at least one long term evaluation of the impact of training delivered each year and this is built into quality assurance procedures through annual management reviews.

A framework for the evaluation of impact of both project work and research projects is now in place.

A programme of casework evaluation has been embraced by the Educational Psychology Service. This is an innovative means of enabling individual psychologists to demonstrate the impact they have had in casework in terms of specific outcomes for children and young people alongside stakeholders' perceptions of impact.

Reports on progress to the national conference for Educational Psychologists in 2007 has generated a great deal of interest and two of our senior managers will present to a symposium organised by HM Inspectors of schools later in 2008.

5. Communicating our Roles and Functions

We are taking steps to improve how we communicate what we do to all our stakeholders. All educational establishments and other agencies have been sent stocks of leaflets about the Service. We continue to distribute these to all stakeholders at the beginning of each academic session.

The Service has responded to requests from schools in the Authority for written guidance on a number of topics and has recently produced leaflets on self harm and

attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD).

Our roles and functions are detailed on the Falkirk Council website and we have had a series of articles and input to Education Matters. The Service will again present at this year's annual Parents' Conference.

This Standards and Quality Report will be distributed widely.

The Educational Psychology Service is active in showcasing its work to training courses for educational psychologists, to national and international conferences and publishes in peer-referenced journals.



Development Plan 2007-2008



Learning to Achieve - Raising Attainment and Achievement in Falkirk Council				
National Priority 1 Attainment and Achievement	National Priority 2 Framework for Learning	National Priority 3 Inclusion and Equality	National Priority 4 Values and Citizenship	National Priority 5 Learning for Life
Support for Education Services in local priority of Effective Learning and Teaching	Support for Education Services in Improving Attendance Support for Education Services in Improving Behaviour	Increased Participation of all stakeholders in the Review, Development and Improvement of the Educational Psychology Service Support for Education Services in Local Priority of Additional Support for Learning	One Environmentally and Service Friendly Office Improved Pupil and Parental Participation in the Work of the Educational Psychology Service	Promote Mental Well-being of Children and Young People Continue to develop Post School Educational Psychology Service
			Educational Psychology Service Management Priorities	Evaluation of Casework Evaluation of Service Delivery Evaluation of Research and Development Continuing Professional Development for all Staff Annual Standards and Quality Report to all Stakeholders Ensure adherence to policy and practice guidelines

The Educational Psychology Service abides by
Falkirk Council's Race Equality Scheme.

If you would like a copy of this leaflet in a community language, Braille, large print
or audio tape please telephone: 01324 504680 or 503680.

此文件設有其他
語文，請向有關
方面索取。

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ਇਹ ਪਰਚਾ ਸਮਾਜ ਦੀਆਂ ਹੋਰ
ਭਾਸ਼ਾਵਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਪੁੱਛਣ ਤੇ ਮਿਲਦਾ ਹੈ।

هذه الوثيقة متاحة عند الطلب
في اللغات الأخرى في المجتمع.

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In line with national agreements

Falkirk Council only employs educational
psychologists who are Chartered with
the British Psychological Society.

