

Summary of the EPS survey for schools and settings 2024

We received 37 surveys back, relating to 39 out of 66 settings ie we had a **59%** response rate to the EP survey. This covered 1 early years nursery, 27 primary schools, 9 secondary schools and 0 FE settings.

Efficiency and effectiveness:

- ✓ **89% of schools agree that their allocation of EP time has been used efficiently** (24% 'extremely' so, 57% 'very much')
- ✓ **95% of schools agree that the EP has contributed to positive outcomes for children /young people** (24% rated as 'significantly' so, 59% 'very much')

In order, the **top 5 EP activities** settings have found most useful are:

1. Statutory assessment and psychological advice for EHCNA
2. Consultation with key staff around a child/young person in your setting
3. Consultation and support for parents/carers around a specific case
4. Attendance at planning meetings
5. Individual casework including observations, assessments and recommendations for strategies

Comments included:

- "Discussion at planning meetings was helpful with XX (name of EP). Before she left, we had a really positive and productive planning meeting during which we discussed resources, shared ideas and I felt very able to share specific issues and problem-solve together."
- "The statutory work has made a significant difference in that we have moved forward with EHCPs for some children. I have valued being signposted to resources and having support for completion of RSAs."

In order, the **top 5 areas of need** that settings valued having EP involvement with are:

1. Social communication and Autism
2. Cognition and learning including MLD, SLD, PMLD
3. Social Emotional Mental Health needs e.g. anxiety, low mood
4. Early trauma and attachment needs
5. Emotionally Based School Avoidance (EBSA)

Example from the 'other' category includes:

- "Children's Rights Group also."

Time allocation and the new consultation model:

This year we have separated off the time for statutory EHCNAs from our offer of consultation time to schools and settings, in order to ensure we could offer both statutory and non-statutory work. We asked for feedback on how this new model was working for schools and settings.

73% (n= 24) SENCOs described positive impacts of the new consultation model

Examples from the comments given include:

- “Consultation time has been brilliant - it is fantastic to be able to support families by accessing high quality support and knowledge from the EP - and so quickly!”
- “I think this has worked much better. I have been able to make RSAs for all of those children that needed them without worrying that I was going to run out of EP time. The consultations meetings have been so useful for staff and parents, for those children who wouldn't have got a look in with the old system. I really hope that the new model stays. It's enabled us to problem solve as a team in a way that we've not been able to before.”
- “I have found that this has given reassurance that I have my own EP to call on for consultation time and has made me focus on the use of this time better, rather than worry about 'saving' EP time for statutory EHCNA work, I think it has helped me separate the two parts of the EP offer and helped us focus on the graduated response and being proactive in consultations, rather than only relying on EP for EHCNA work.”
- “This model has worked really well and we have been able to use EP time to consult with parents and problem-solve strategies to support.”
- “This has worked really well. It has allowed us as a school to pace the work and be more specific around supporting individual needs and patterns in school. A great decision!”

12% (n=4) SENCOs expressed frustration relating to the lack of non-statutory individual assessment work.

Examples from the comments given include:

- “The only downside of this is that we don't get a full report/assessments or observations completed for children unless it is part of the RSA. It would be helpful if some of the hours could be used to observe a child with the SENCO or complete assessments to further support the child.”
- “We are grateful for this (especially as we are catching up with EHCNAs – sorry!). However, we really would like to use our EP time to observe and make recommendations for individual pupils.”
- “I understood that we were not allowed to use the EP for individual casework including observations, assessments and recommendations and this is something that I really miss.”

2 other comments referred to the waiting time for an EP to see a child and the fact that by separating off the statutory work it feels like there are less hours available for support.

We asked what could improve service delivery:

- 76% suggested Offering training on a cluster basis to share the cost between several schools
- 33% suggested Opportunities to buy in additional time for training
- 30% suggested Opportunities to buy in additional EP time for consultation
- 12% suggested Opportunities to buy in additional time for staff supervision

Examples from the 'other' category includes:

- "I would like to be able to ask an Ed Psych to do individual observations of specific children."
- "Just more time!!!"

When asked if the school/setting had **commissioned traded services**, 12 schools said they had purchased EP time. In order, the top 3 reasons were:

1. Training
2. Supervision and consultation
3. Additional casework

Examples from the comments section:

- "Quality (of training) was very high. All staff gained from the session. Good Value. We will purchase more training in future."
- "Precision teaching and trauma awareness training were both excellent."
- Comic Strip training and Trauma and Attachment training - Both training sessions were bought and had a great impact on practice within school."

When asked for any **additional comments** (Question 10) we had lots of very generous, comprehensive and complementary responses, examples from across all team members include:

- ✓ "I really value our EP and continue to learn a lot – I am very grateful for the professional discussions we have. I know the service is under huge pressures, and there are a lot of conflicting pressures, but I always feel that our EP is there for me should I need it."
- ✓ "We are so grateful for XX's time and support. She is a great colleague and parents and carers have really valued her work, she has been extremely supportive of the SEND team with regards to supporting meetings and offering advice, her support for staff training has also been really well received. I found the complex needs group really helpful; it was nice to attend a meeting that was so proactive in problem solving and making positive connections across the city. We would love more EP time!!! I think we are as efficient as we possibly can be and there still is

not anywhere near the hours to meet demand. If we had more hours we would use more time for consultations, supporting parents, being preventative and proactive in KS3. We would use additional time to put forward EHCNAs earlier with better EP advice in a proactive and preventative way rather than in a reactive and panicked way. We are grateful of the training offer from the EP service, as a school we have accessed the Early Trauma and EBSA training, we have also had staff trained regarding particular students' needs linked to secure base, emotion coaching etc. We also value the ELSA training - it would be amazing if this was run more often and at a lower cost!"

- ✓ "XXX School are highly appreciative of the work which XX (name of EP) does with our team, staff and pupils. Our staff are keen to attend sessions when available, and her 1:1 staff sessions are beneficial throughout the year. The work and package of support offered to the school, leadership and class team was efficient and responsive to our needs at the time of loss of a pupil in September."
- ✓ "I realise that the most valuable aspect for me is the space to talk, discuss and reflect on my work supporting children and families. This is what I appreciate so much from my EP and I feel that we have a good working relationship. Although we don't follow a supervision model for our discussions, I think this would be a really valuable aspect of the role if it could be included or considered. I am familiar with supervision (from some recent study/training in therapeutic counselling) and I feel that it would be so helpful if this could be introduced somehow. The role of the SENCo is so overwhelming at times and we hold a lot of information - at times it is really helpful to share this with another professional who is able to understand and provide the space for open and honest conversations to take place."
- ✓ "Fantastic knowledge base and strategies. Supports school and individual staff really well. Flexible and versatile in ways they work."
- ✓ "The educational psychologist service is such a valuable resources to ensuring the best outcomes for our little people. I have to say that XX (name of EP) is very valued in our school; she guides us and parents in a very gentle & supportive manner sometimes with rather tricky issues."
- ✓ "You are an excellent service and support to our CYP and professionals. I am so grateful our LA has a core EP offer and I cannot stress the support and advice you give to me as SENCO and our parent/carers is so valued!"
- ✓ "Thank you so much to XX. Her consultation with the team around a pupil in Y6 who was at danger of permanent suspension had such a positive impact. It gave the teacher a deeper understanding of the needs of the pupil and the confidence to share ideas as to how best to support him. The pupil has had no suspensions since this meeting."
- ✓ "It is always helpful to be able to talk over situations with an Ed Psych. It

was helpful when taking over a new caseload to be able to talk through the SEND register. As previously mentioned, I really miss having the option of asking an Ed Psych to observe a child as we now only really have 'Learning Support Hub' to go to when seeking advice. We are still getting letters from the hospital recommending that we ask the Ed Psych to look at individual children and have to say that we can't. Thank you as always for your service as we value working in partnership with you."