



Professional Development Programme

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# Professional Development Programme for Education Psychologists in Scotland

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A Summary



2000-2001

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

- 1 The Professional Development Programme for Educational Psychologists in Scotland is managed by the Association of Scottish Principal Educational Psychologists (ASPEP).
- 2 The Professional Development Programme gratefully acknowledges the support of the Scottish Executive Education Department in funding and promoting the Programme.
- 3 The cooperation of local Councils in agreeing the themes of the Programme and enabling educational psychologists to participate in the projects is appreciated. Psychologists carry out the research, development and dissemination work for up to twelve days in the yearly PDP cycle.
- 4 The further assistance of Clackmannanshire, Perth and Kinross and North Ayrshire Councils respectively for providing secondment of Dr Jenni Barr, Dr Cyril Hellier and Ms Julie McPherson as Coordinators of the Programme is gratefully acknowledged.
- 5 The Association of Scottish Principal Educational Psychologists is gratefully thanked for the services of Mr Stephen Iliffe who has acted as Moderator to the Programme.
- 6 The Programme is subject to the scrutiny of a Steering Group which meets on three occasions in the course of the year. The participation of Mrs Shannon Bigham (East Lothian Council), Mr Jim Banks (Aberdeenshire Council), Ms Carolyn Brown (British Psychological Society, Scottish Division of Educational Psychology), Mr Hamish McPhee (ASPEP), Mrs Sandra Manning (SEED) and Mr David Miller (SEED) is acknowledged with thanks. The Steering Group has been ably chaired by Mrs Margery Browning, HMI.
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# The Professional Development Programme for Educational Psychologists in Scotland: A Summary of the 2000-2001 Projects

*Jenni Barr, Cyril Hellier, Julie McPherson and Billy Bonar, PDP Coordinators*

*The Professional Development Programme (PDP) is managed by the Association of Scottish Principal Educational Psychologists (ASPEP) in collaboration with local authorities and funded by the Scottish Executive Education Department (SEED). This is the sixth cycle of the programme, which involves groups of psychologists in cross-boundary project work and other professional development activities, around agreed themes, over a period of about one year. The outcomes of this work are disseminated to colleagues and others in the field of education. This booklet gives a summary of the activities and findings of the two themes addressed by the 2000-2001 programme, namely, **Developing a Role for Local Authority Psychological Services Post-16** and **New Community Schools: Challenges and Opportunities for Educational Psychologists**. The purpose of this document is to draw the attention of colleagues in applied psychology, education and related fields to the valuable work undertaken in these areas. Those wishing more information should contact the authors, who will be pleased to discuss their projects. Copies of the more detailed reports and INSET materials can be downloaded from the PDP website ([www.scet.com/pdp/](http://www.scet.com/pdp/)) and copies of detailed reports can be purchased via the Coordinators. A list of project participants is given at the end of this booklet.*



Professional Development Programme

## DEVELOPING A ROLE FOR LOCAL AUTHORITY PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES POST 16

*Jenni Barr, PDP Senior Coordinator*

### Scene-setting: New Outcomes for a PDP Project

The main outcome for previous PDP groups has invariably been a written report, published under PDP, and the final product has often included materials for use in training. This PDP project was slightly different, in terms both of process and of product. At the outset, the report of the Beattie Committee, *Implementing Inclusiveness: Realising Potential*, had only recently been published (SEED, 1999). The report looked at the needs of vulnerable young people in transition from school to further education and training, and it made a number of novel recommendations concerning services to 16-24 year olds that could be provided by educational psychologists.

The Committee concluded:

*We therefore recommend that the Scottish Executive in co-operation with the Association of Scottish Principal Educational Psychologists, the British Psychological Society and COSLA, should develop a specification for psychological services for 16-24 year olds based on the outline above. They should also review staffing levels and training requirements for psychological services in Scotland in light of this new emphasis and extension of role.*

*(SEED, 1999, 6.46)*

There was a need for ASPEP to start the process of preparing a specification for this new role for services. An ASPEP working group was, therefore, set up in March 2000 comprising senior and principal psychologists from seven councils in Scotland. It was agreed that the work of this group could fit the PDP annual cycle. The members of the group



Beattie: setting the scene

were: **Anna Boni, Alan Haughey, Robert Johnstone, Ken Keighren, Ian Liddle, Les Meade and John Proctor.**



The PDP group's main tasks

Two main tasks were identified. First, consideration of the professional issues involved, if services were to undertake such new roles, would prepare the group for future discussions with the Scottish Executive and other interested parties. Second, a process of consultation with the profession, the Scottish Executive Education Department (SEED) and, from December 2000, the Beattie Implementation Team.

The full PDP report describes these dual processes, but the main outcome of the project was a formal proposal to develop a specification for educational psychology services which addresses sections 6.45 and 6.46 of the Beattie Report. By April 2001, a final version had been approved and funding was secured from the National Action Group.

### **The Professional Strand: Establishing the Current Position through Survey and Interviews**

Educational psychology in Scotland is unique in terms of its statutory foundation, involving services not just within education (under the Education (Scotland) Act, 1980) but also alongside Social Work and the Reporter's services (under the Children (Scotland) Act, 1995). The age range of children covered by such work is birth to 19, and traditionally services have been staffed to cover this range. Considerable work is done with those who have special needs who remain at school beyond 16 in terms of transition issues and future needs planning, and with those still "looked after" by their local council, but to date psychologists have had limited contact with young people after they have left school-based education.

There has been an increasing demand from colleges, training providers and careers services for information and input regarding young people whose transition into further education and training has been problematic. Frequently, these are young people who have been known to psychological services during their school careers. Thus, while no statutory arrangements have been in place for psychological service involvement beyond school, over the years informal arrangements have been found to be beneficial at a number of levels.

The PDP group conducted a survey of existing psychological service practice in relation to FE colleges and training providers. Information was gathered concerning service-level agreements and the nature of any input to FE establishments and training providers. Only one service was able to refer to an existing service-level agreement, though other services indicated that formal discussion and negotiation about service input had taken place with FE colleges or training providers. Within the FE sector:



Professional strand:  
the historical baseline

- ▲ 23% of psychological services had offered input in relation to students who formerly had had a Record of Needs
- ▲ 31% had offered input in relation to other students
- ▲ 29% of services had offered more general input

In relation to training providers:

- ▲ 20% had offered input regarding trainees who had had a Record of Needs
- ▲ 17% had offered input in relation to other trainees
- ▲ only one service had offered more general input



Current baseline:  
survey

It was apparent from the survey that the current level of input by psychological services to FE establishments and training providers was restricted and the spread patchy. The survey is useful in providing a baseline against which future developments can be measured.

By means of interviews conducted with a range of stakeholders, the group then explored the issues within the FE and training sectors likely to have direct impact on the potential role of psychological services. Key themes to emerge included: funding, staff development, disaffection among students, management of behaviour, attendance, course completion, guidance and support systems, individual support, curricular issues, transition from secondary school, assessment and evaluation. These are areas where psychological services have already developed expertise.

Finally in establishing the current position, the group sought the views of stakeholders in the FE and training sectors on potential roles for psychological services.

### **The Professional Strand: Issues Relating to a Specification for Psychological Services**

On the basis of the foregoing, the group explored issues which would arise in developing psychological services to the FE and training sectors in order to satisfy the remit identified in the Beattie Report. Four key areas were identified:

- ▲ the services to be offered
- ▲ the structure and management of operational procedures
- ▲ issues of funding and staffing
- ▲ issues of development and training for psychological services

There was a consensus that core services provided should include:

- ▲ consultation, assessment and intervention
- ▲ general information
- ▲ specific advice
- ▲ staff development and support
- ▲ specific projects
- ▲ help with policy development
- ▲ planning and research

The group concluded that within psychological services there already exist organisational structures and a model of service delivery that can be adapted to meet the needs of the post-school sector. Factors seen as critical to the success of expansion by psychological services into this new sector were:

- ▲ increasing the yearly output of trained educational psychologists
- ▲ establishing appropriate training and support for the new work
- ▲ obtaining adequate additional funding, since the new role would be beyond the specification of the local authority



**Current baseline:  
interviews**



**Professional strand:  
specifying the role**



**Adopting the role:  
resources required**

## The Formal Strand: Exploratory Meeting

A series of meetings was held over the period of the project to link the work of the group with national post-Beattie developments. In March 2000, an initial meeting was held with members of the Beattie Implementation Team and members of HMI to set the parameters for the development of a service specification. It was agreed that:

- ▲ funding issues would need to be explored
- ▲ present psychological services should extend their functions rather than create a separate specialised group of educational psychologists
- ▲ current best practice should be extended to meet the particular needs of the new client group and context
- ▲ additional training would be required for psychologists
- ▲ given the continuing national shortage of educational psychologists, recruitment issues require to be addressed



Formal strand:  
negotiated developments

## The Formal Strand: National Action Group

In September 2000, Nicol Stephen (Deputy Minister for Enterprise and Lifelong Learning) announced that the implementation of the Beattie Report would receive substantial additional funding, and that a National Action Group would take forward the committee's recommendations. For the PDP group, members of the Beattie Implementation Team became the identified link with the National Action Group.



Formal strand:  
Government implementation  
structure

## The Formal Strand: Meeting with SEED and Beattie Implementation Team

This meeting, held in December 2000, allowed the PDP group's draft proposals to be discussed in the light of developments from the National Action Group. Careers service companies had been given responsibility to coordinate multi-agency bids for Inclusiveness Strategy projects, and it was recommended that the PDP proposal should seek to dovetail with the timescale for these projects, and should also take account of any Inclusiveness Strategy projects where psychological services were already involved.

## The Formal Strand: National Consulting Meeting for Educational Psychologists

As a next step in developing the proposal, a national consultation meeting was held in January 2001, attended by 40 psychologists representing 17 local authorities. Information was shared and the views of the profession on the draft proposal were elicited in small group and plenary discussions.



Formal strand:  
Consulting on the proposal

## The Formal Strand: Redrafting the Proposal and Final Meeting

Following the consultation meeting, the proposal discussed earlier with the SEED officials was revised and amended by the PDP group. Thereafter, it was again discussed with SEED officials and the Beattie Implementation Team in April 2001 before final changes were made. The completed proposal constitutes the concluding section of this report.

## Final Proposal to Develop a Specification for Educational Psychology Services in line with Sections 6.45 and 6.46 of the Beattie Report

A key component of the proposal is the appointment in June 2001 of two (or three) experienced educational psychologists as National Development Officers on a F.T.E. basis to develop further the specification for psychological services described in sections 6.45 and 6.46 of the Beattie Report, along the lines indicated in the PDP paper.

During year 2001-02, these officers will:

- ▲ consult with a widely constituted Advisory Group
- ▲ establish links with the two post-graduate training courses for educational psychologists
- ▲ establish a practitioner network for those psychologists in local Inclusiveness Strategy projects
- ▲ survey stakeholders on the most effective use of such services
- ▲ offer a consultancy service to FE colleges, training providers and Inclusiveness Strategy projects which do not incorporate psychological service input

In years 2002-04, these officers will:

- ▲ support and evaluate the pilot work undertaken by educational psychologists through the Inclusiveness Strategy projects and elsewhere in the F.E. and training sectors
- ▲ organise a National Seminar for psychologists and stakeholders
- ▲ develop a model for the use of psychological services in post-school training and placement along with proposed costings
- ▲ evaluate the need and demand for such a service

The estimated cost of piloting and evaluating these services is £228,000 over the three year period 2001-04. This figure is lower than originally suggested, since it assumes that the funding of psychological service input to local Inclusiveness Strategy projects will have been incorporated into previously submitted bids.



Beattie implementation:  
the final proposal



NDO remit:  
2001-2002



NDO remit:  
2002-2004



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# NEW COMMUNITY SCHOOLS: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGISTS

*Cyril Hellier and Julie McPherson, PDP Coordinators*

New Community Schools (NCS) have been prompted by central government as part of its social inclusion and raising attainment agendas. Such schools are a recent phenomenon with no apparent models within the United Kingdom to lead the way. The availability of outline guidance only has resulted in considerable diversity of response and innovation at the local level.

*The New Community Schools Prospectus* (1998) stipulated targeting specified areas including:

- ▲ raised attainment, to be determined either by an increased percentage or an increased number of pupils attaining 5-14 levels and/or certificated awards
- ▲ raised attendance and reduced exclusions
- ▲ improved service integration
- ▲ improved learning
- ▲ improved social welfare
- ▲ improved health

(SOEID, 1998)

It was envisaged that targets would be set and outcomes measured in at least three of these areas. Targets would be set at a higher level than if the school did not have NCS designation.

The rapid development of the NCS initiative, as initially outlined in the prospectus and implemented to date in two phases, has provided opportunities for educational psychologists to reflect on the possibilities with respect to their professional relationships, work practice and service delivery within these schools. Evaluation of the initiative has been commissioned from the Institute of Education, University of London. The main purpose of the evaluation is the development and dissemination of good practice although it will also monitor outcomes.

It is within this context of development and opportunity that the eleven participants of this strand of the PDP undertook to research the aetiology of the community schools movement; and to explore aspects of the current NCS implementation and the role of educational psychologists within it. The sections of the report serve to provide:

- ▲ an outline of the psychological and international contexts within which NCS have developed
- ▲ an examination of the roles that educational psychologists have and may play, within NCS, and of the limitations on these roles
- ▲ an exploration of the issues involved in evaluation of NCS

## Background to New Community Schools

In this section, **Bob Leadbetter** provides a *Community Psychology Perspective on New Community Schools*. He notes that it can be argued that NCS and full service schools in the USA arose out of community psychology. An outline of this particular perspective is provided, noting that community psychology is radically



NCS prospectus targets



PDP report:  
the ground covered

different to other approaches to *people problems* with the differences arising out of its:



Community psychology perspective

- ▲ emphasis on social policy and action
- ▲ permeable boundaries with other areas of thought and action
- ▲ commitment to a preventative orientation over that of repair and remediation

(Levine and Perkins, 1997)

**Matthew Musset, Jeanne McHugh and Gill Emmanuel** in *International Perspectives on New Community Schools* provide descriptions of the broadening of functions of schools at an international level and the role that the educational psychologist may undertake in helping to identify and develop strategies to overcome obstacles to successful collaborative working (Davis, 1997). This section reviews the literature which suggests that the idea for NCS has evolved primarily in the USA where, over recent years, it has been recognised that in order to secure successful futures for disadvantaged pupils and families, it is imperative that their health and social support needs should be addressed in the context of educational reform. Schools providing such services, either on-site or by linking services with schools, have become known as *full service schools*, the nature of which are described in the work of Dryfoos, who has written in an enthusiastically and prolific manner on the subject (Dryfoos, 1993; 1994; 1995; 1996). A full service school is described as:



NCS:  
international perspectives

*...a one stop centre where the educational, physical, psychological and social requirements of pupils and their families are addressed in a rational, holistic manner.*

(Dryfoos, 1996)

The *Historical Background in Scotland* of the community school movement following the *Alexander Report* (1975) provides further depth to the current context. This, along with an exposition on the challenges of collaborative working in *Why Collaborate*, completes the extensive scene-setting of current developments.



NCS:  
Scottish roots

### The Role of the Educational Psychologist in New Community Schools

A second sub-group, which included **Shirley Boyle** and **Alistair Hewitt**, began the examination of the role of the educational psychologist in NCS. A questionnaire survey of all Principal Educational Psychologists in Scotland was conducted. Subsequently a small grouping of six practitioners with the greatest experience in NCS was identified. Each member of this grouping undertook to be interviewed at length. The trends emerging were a decrease in casework and some slight evidence of a quantitative increase in application of consultation models of service delivery. The strongest factor that emerged as influencing changes in the role of educational psychologists was their involvement within multi-agency teams, such as School Liaison Groups and Joint Assessment Teams. There was also evidence of creative working given the opportunity of increased time allocation. All of these aspects together created an optimistic picture, although many questions remain to be addressed.



New role opportunities  
for EP?

### Personal Learning Plans: Product or Process

A feature of each NCS has been the piloting of Personal Learning Plans (PLP) which are seen as the key element in ensuring that each child has a coherent, well planned programme of development. The PLP needs to fit in with other planning and recording methods within each school. **Elizabeth King** and **Mark Wilson**

considered the issues involved in utilising PLP within the planning process in a special school context. A study was conducted of the implementation of the PLP in a NCS consisting of a special school and a primary school which share a building. The special school had a roll of 30 primary and 12 nursery aged children presenting a broad range of learning needs arising from a variety of physical, sensory or psychological impairments. The most important factor to be pointed up by the study was the centrality of parents' views. This raised the important question of what methods best facilitate parents' involvement in the assessment and planning process. An important aspect of this section is the consideration given to the role of the psychologist in the processes developed.



### **Evaluation: How do we know if NCS are Effective?**

Evaluation of the NCS initiative is in the early stages at the time of going to press. In 1999, the SOEID indicated that:

*The national evaluation will complement and take account of the local activity. It will encourage local evaluations to have a core focus in addition to pursuing particular local concerns.*

(SOEID 1999)

In the framework for national evaluation it is emphasised that:

*The main purpose of the evaluation is the development and dissemination of good practice. It will also monitor outcomes.*

(SEED 2000)

For educational psychologists this has presented a challenge both to attempt to put the NCS initiative in perspective and to consider the impact it is having on the practice of psychologists across councils.

A fourth subgroup, comprising **Alison Smith**, **Liz Christmas** and **Dave Clark**, considered issues of evaluation including research data from on-going projects. **Dave Clark** gleaned a wealth of information regarding the perceptions of parents in one NCS initiative. This illustrates a potential role for educational psychologists as facilitators for such reflective practice.



**Alison Smith** was actively working with a NCS that had chosen to involve an external agency to complete an early impact evaluation. This involved data collection in the form of semi-structured interviews with representatives from the school, the education department, health, the social work department, and community education.

In another recently designated NCS, **Liz Christmas** carried out a small scale study looking at teaching staff perceptions. This may provide a useful baseline for further evaluation one or two years into that project.

### **Overall Conclusions**

*Some reflections on New Community Schools* lists a series of issues which should be kept in mind as NCS initiatives continue. These include:

- ▲ costing of the anticipated long term benefits for local communities and beyond
- ▲ the need for built-in evaluation at local operational management level



- ▲ availability of support services
- ▲ issues of sustainability
- ▲ the need for evidence of collaborative working
- ▲ the need for evidence of community involvement at all levels
- ▲ the expectation that parents will not need or want access to all services, nor will they all desire contact in the same ways
- ▲ the idea that direct comparisons of NCS will be difficult given the local and organic nature of their development

*Guiding principles for psychological involvement in NCS* indicates that community psychology offers a framework for analysis, namely:



**Community psychology:  
a helpful framework**

- ▲ the relevance of an ecological community/institutional focus rather than an individual deficit model
- ▲ the location of services within the community where innovative solutions can be focused at all levels, from individual to systemic
- ▲ the aspiration to enable long-term positive change for service recipients, facilitating stakeholders in solving their own difficulties
- ▲ a solution focused approach which seeks to build on positive exceptions and avoids stigmatisation
- ▲ the theory base of Vygotsky, emphasising that mediated learning has a role to play

The importance of evaluation as a guide to decision-making at all levels is emphasised with suggestions as to its nature and the potential contribution of psychological services as follows:



**Evaluation:  
the PS contribution**

- ▲ the use of psychological principles of evaluation, including a balance of quantitative and qualitative measures and determining of baselines
- ▲ psychological services could take an active role in promoting and developing local evaluation procedures
- ▲ highlighting the complexity arising from multiple interacting factors
- ▲ ensuring active involvement of young people and their families, school staff and other stakeholders in evaluation activities

*Operational considerations for psychological service involvement in NCS* points to evidence underpinning the basic principles of NCS and the implications for educational psychology which arise from this emphasises the advantages of:

- ▲ early intervention
- ▲ accessibility of services
- ▲ issues of sustainability
- ▲ collaboration
- ▲ contextual supports

For educational psychologists, time is seen as a significant factor in the development of their role within NCS.

Finally, *Issues for development to facilitate psychological involvement in NCS* covers issues of:

- ▲ confidentiality and the sharing of information
- ▲ development of trust and respect across disciplines, requirement for effective collaborative working
- ▲ clarification of roles and discrete skills of different professional groups
- ▲ opportunities for joint training
- ▲ flexibility and creativity in working practices

The overall experience of this PDP group was of the shared exploration of a topic that from the outset was relatively unfamiliar to all. As a result many questions were raised. The conclusions reached reflect the learning about facts and fictions regarding NCS and offer the profession and other interested parties, evidence and insights into their current working. Not all questions could be addressed, far less answered, but the combined working of the four sub-groups resulted in illumination and articulation of many key issues. These relate to the skills of educational psychologists and the organisation and management of their contribution to this area of interdisciplinary working. Finally, it is suggested that the challenges raised for psychologists should be perceived as opportunities for creativity and the implementation and facilitation of positive change.



**Implications for PS practice**



**PS involvement:  
developmental issues**



**NCS:  
Meeting the challenge**

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