

Educational Psychology

INVOLVEMENT IN AN EDUCATION, HEALTH, AND
CARE NEEDS ASSESSMENT (EHCNA)



WHAT IS AN EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGIST?

Educational Psychologists work together with parents, schools and other professionals to determine what the child or young person's strengths and difficulties are.

Educational Psychologists review a child's development and progress across 4 areas:

- Communication and Interaction;
- Cognition and Learning;
- Social, Emotional & Mental Health;
- Physical & Sensory.

Educational Psychologists use this information to make recommendations to support children and young people in order for them to make progress across these areas of need, where there has been a clear need identified for the child. We take into account and value the strengths of the child or young person, what they are doing well, to help inform this process. Educational Psychologist apply their educational and psychological knowledge throughout this process and gathering information might be done in a variety of ways.

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF AN EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY ASSESSMENT?

Every child and young person should be provided with opportunities to thrive and fulfil their potential.

Through individual psychological assessments, EPs identify a child/young person's strengths and challenges and offer evidence-based strategies and plans to support them in their school/setting.

Parents/carers give their consent for an assessment to take place via the EHCNA request process.

A Statutory Assessment is carried out when a child or a young person is going through the process of an Education, Health and Care Needs Assessment (EHCNA).

Educational Psychology reports for EHCNAs (often referred to as Educational Psychology Advice) are used by the Statutory Assessment Team when they are drafting SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities) Support Plans or Education, Health, and Care Plans (EHCPs).

Educational Psychology reports for EHCNAs are used by the Statutory Assessment Team alongside other professionals, school, and parental information when they draft EHCPs.



WHAT DOES AN EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY ASSESSMENT INVOLVE?

There is no single approach to an educational psychology assessment because every assessment will depend on the child or young person and their circumstances. Educational psychologists use their professional judgement to determine which assessment approach they feel is most appropriate.



WHAT SHOULD AN EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY ASSESSMENT INCLUDE?

1. The child or young person's views
2. The parent or carer's views
3. Assessment of relevant areas of challenge that the child/young person experiences
4. Recommendations for areas to target for support and strategies to be implemented by schools/settings

1. THE CHILD OR YOUNG PERSON'S VIEWS

- Information is gathered to understand what is important to the child or young person and what they like or dislike.
- This might be through conversation, prompts and resources or through more formal standardised questionnaires.
- For children and young people who are not able to share their views directly, this can be done through observations or discussions with the people who know them best (e.g., parents/carers or school staff who work with them).
- For children and young people who can communicate their views but do not feel able to meet directly with an educational psychologist (e.g., on account of anxiety), they may be able to share their views indirectly, for example by email.

2. THE PARENT OR CARER'S VIEWS

- Parents and carers share their views to communicate what has been working well and what they would like to be different regarding the child's or young person's education.
- They also communicate their hopes and aspirations for the child's or young person's future.
- This is usually done during a meeting, but can be complemented with questionnaires, emails or other sources of information.

3. ASSESSMENT OF RELEVANT AREAS OF CHALLENGE THAT THE CHILD OR YOUNG PERSON EXPERIENCES

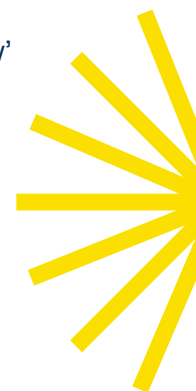
- Assessment can take many forms and there is no requirement for specific assessment approaches to be used; the approach used is determined by the educational psychologist based on their professional judgement.
- The term 'assessment' is best defined as the action of evaluating or estimating the abilities, skills, or qualities of someone or something. There are many ways in which this can be done and this is not limited to formal tests of cognitive ability.
- Assessments could be undertaken to explore different areas of need (e.g. anxiety, learning needs, working memory).
- In addition to gathering pupil voice, the following are examples of possible assessments that can be undertaken if deemed appropriate:
 - Observation
 - Consultation
 - Play based assessment
 - Cognitive assessments
 - Dynamic assessments
 - Personal construct Psychology
 - Questionnaires
 - Scaling methods



4. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR AREAS TO TARGET FOR SUPPORT AND STRATEGIES TO BE IMPLEMENTED BY SCHOOLS/SETTINGS

When providing any psychological advice, educational psychologists should:

- Apply their psychological knowledge and expertise
- Have access to, and take account of, relevant background information about the child/young person
- Have direct contact – this may be carried out using a range of different methods/platforms – with the CYP to gather views and complete any assessment activities as deemed appropriate within professional judgement.
- Consult with parents/carers and all educational provider(s)
- Utilise a range of information sources to develop a better understanding of the barriers to success
- Oversee and / or have access to records demonstrating an ‘Assess, Plan Do Review’ (APDR) period of intervention as part of a graduated response to need.
- Employ professional judgement when considering information about the CYP’s performance in a range of contexts
- Ensure the sources of any evidence gathered are clearly identified and evaluated.
- Describe the limitations of any evidence gathering process with discussion about the implications of these
- Triangulate information from the above to inform a hypothesis, leading to a formulation of the CYP’s needs
- Exercise caution about the use and reporting of norm-referenced or standardised assessments to ensure clarity about the uses and limitations of such tools.
- Communicate a summary of involvement and recommendations to the CYP, parents/carers and professional partners



Educational psychologists will write a report to summarise their assessment, including the information above. This will include details on how to contact them to clarify any questions or concerns.