

## **SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**REPORT TO:** Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Panel

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**WARD(S):** All

### **PART I** **FOR COMMENT AND DISCUSSION**

#### **EDUCATION PSYCHOLOGY SERVICES**

##### **1 Purpose of Report**

To provide an overview of Education Psychology Services since the transfer back from Cambridge Education

##### **2 Recommendation**

The Panel is requested to note and acknowledge the work of the Education Psychology service and the excellent work they do in supporting vulnerable groups.

##### **3. The Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy, the JSNA and the Five Year Plan**

##### **3a. Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy Priorities**

The report addresses the following priorities:

1. Protecting vulnerable children  
The Psychology Service covers students with a range of developmental and social needs.
3. Improving mental health and wellbeing  
As with the above point, the Service has a stated aim of supporting those with mental health requirements.

##### **3b. Five Year Plan Outcomes**

The Psychology Service contributes to the following outcomes:

- Our children and young people will have the best start in life and opportunities to give them positive lives.
- Our people will become healthier and will manage their own health, care and support needs.

#### 4. **Implications**

##### (a) Financial

There are no significant financial implications associated with this report.

##### (b) Risk Management

<b>Risk</b>	<b>Mitigating action</b>	<b>Opportunities</b>
Legal	None	
Property	None	
Human Rights	None	
Health and Safety	None	
Employment Issues	None	
Equalities Issues	Seeking to close gaps between peers and vulnerable groups	
Community Support	None	
Communications	None	Promoting Slough's educational successes
Community Safety	None	
Financial	None	
Timetable for delivery	None	
Project Capacity	None	
Other	None	

##### (c) Human Rights Act and Other Legal Implications

There are no significant Human Rights Act or other Legal implications.

##### (d) Equalities Impact Assessment

There is no need for an equalities impact assessment.

##### (e) Workforce

There are no workforce implications.

#### 5 **Supporting Information**

##### **Introduction**

5.1 The Educational Psychology Service (EPS) comprises of 15 full time and part time Educational Psychologists, Trainee Educational Psychologists and a Psychology Support Worker. Educational Psychologists (EP) are applied psychologists trained to a masters or doctorate level of post-graduate study. Prior to post-graduate training many EPs held careers in teaching or worked with children and young people in other roles.

5.2 EPs work with children and young people from 0 to 25 years old primarily in educational settings. EPs help children and young people who are experiencing

problems that hinder successful learning and participation in school. These problems could include a range of learning difficulties, social, emotional and mental health difficulties.

### **Service delivery**

- 5.3 The EPS is predominately a traded service in which schools buy in service contracts that range from a few hours of EP time per week to two days of EP time per week. All schools in Slough receive a service from the EPS apart from two primary schools. This means that the non-statutory work of the service is self-funded. The traded element of the service accounts for about 70% of service activities.
- 5.4 EPs are also required to contribute psychological advice towards the Statutory Education, Health and Care Assessment for children with complex needs. Such an assessment is agreed via a multi-agency decision-making panel for the most vulnerable children in Slough whose needs require an additional level of support to what can be provided within the school's budget. This statutory element of EP work accounts for about 20% of service activities.
- 5.5 In addition EPs must carry out a high level of professional development and supervision in line with national standards which account for about 10% of service activities.

### **Approach to service delivery**

- 5.6 The EPS is committed to achieving positive outcomes for as many children as possible in Slough. Whilst some of the service delivery involves assessment and intervention for individual children and young people, EPs are also involved in designing and delivering targeted group interventions, supporting staff skill and knowledge through delivering training, and working on whole school projects and research.
- 5.7 The EPS works towards a set of guiding principles which include ensuring child and parent views are heard, a commitment to inclusion, outcomes-focused work and the promotion of equal opportunities.
- 5.8 Work in schools is also negotiated in the context of local and national priorities such as the need to prioritise vulnerable groups of children. The EPS looks for ways to support other teams and focuses within the local authority such as involvement in the mental health agenda, the offer of additional support to help settle child refugees and providing a service to the Virtual School (which supports children looked after by the local authority) and the Youth offending Service.

### **Outcomes and Impact**

- 5.9 For the academic year 2015-2016 outcome measures demonstrate positive changes for vulnerable children whom have received support from the EPS. This has contributed towards closing the gap in attainment between children who received EP involvement and their peers. Please see Appendix 1 for service-level outcome data.

- 5.10 Impact measures have demonstrated a positive increase in staff confidence in how they support vulnerable children. Please see Appendix 1 for service-level impact data.

### **Current risks to service delivery**

- 5.11 Recruitment and retention is currently the biggest risk facing the service. There is a national shortage of EPs and at present the service is reliant on the use of agency EPs to fulfil the school contract and statutory responsibilities. Agency EPs are also very difficult to find and recent government legislation which affects agency workers (IR35) may have an impact on the retention of current agency staff in the near future.
- 5.12 At present several additional schools, services and teams have approached the EPS to commission ongoing new work from September 2017. This would provide opportunity for the EPS to support a greater number of children in Slough. However, the EPS will need to grow in order to accommodate such requests.
- 5.13 In addition the Local Authority have made the recent decision not to offer any newly recruited EPs a salary on the Soulbury Pay Scale which is in use across Local Authorities and outlines the professional pay scale standard, and terms and conditions, for EPs. This is likely to further impact recruitment and retention of EPs in Slough and will risk the delivery of future school and statutory services.

## **6. Conclusion**

The EPS is highly regarded by schools and settings in Slough and demonstrates positive outcomes for vulnerable children and young people. EPs offer a unique and specialist role in supporting prevention and early intervention, and are involved in supporting the most vulnerable and complex children and young people in Slough.

## **7. Comments of Other Committees**

This information has not been to any other committees.

## **8. Appendices Attached**

'A' - EPS Outcomes and Impact Data

## **9. Background Papers**

None.