

# Academy Schools Service Guide 2023-2024



WBC Educational Psychology Service



West Berkshire  
COUNCIL

# Welcome

*We are a well-established, professional psychological support service for children, young people (0-25 years of age) and those who support and care for them. By applying psychology we encourage inclusive practice in educational settings. Our aim is to promote the development and psychological wellbeing of all children and young people, but particularly the most vulnerable, to enable them to flourish and reach their full potential.*

## *Why choose West Berkshire Educational Psychology Service (WBEPS)*

*We have:*

- Experience of working within, and supporting, a range of different mainstream and specialist provisions, in a variety of urban and rural Local Authorities, both nationally and internationally.*
- Flexible ways of working through the diverse range of knowledge, skills, experiences and training held within the team.*
- Close working relationships with partners across the Local Authority including the Special Educational Needs team and Education Support Services.*
- An awareness and understanding of protocols and developments across the Local Authority and nationally in education, health and social care.*
- Established systems in place for ease of service purchase and delivery, as well as prioritising consistent delivery and value for money.*
- We encourage feedback from professionals, parents and pupils to inform our service delivery and improvements to the Educational Psychology Service (EPS)*
- Well established and effective long term Local Authority-wide projects, for instance for example: 'Emotional Literacy Support Assistant (ELSA) training and supervision ELSA' and 'Therapeutic Thinking'*
- Good links with universities to enable us to keep abreast of current research and evidence-based practice and interventions.*
- Research skills which enable us to plan, develop, implement and analyse the effectiveness of interventions, as well as critically analyse evidence based practice.*

*All Educational Psychologists working for WBEPS are qualified to Masters or Doctorate level through their professional post-graduate training. We are all registered with the Health and Care Professionals Council (HCPC) and adhere to the HCPC and British Psychological Society (BPS) Code of Conduct and Ethical Guidance, providing quality assurance for those with whom we work.*

*Members of our team are accredited as:*

- Mindfulness practitioners*
- Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) instructors*
- Psychological Perspectives in Education and Primary Care (PPEPCare) trainers*
- Video Interaction Guidance (VIG) supervisors*
- ELSA trainers*
- Group Theraplay*

# Meet the Team

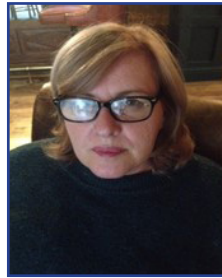
## West Berkshire Educational Psychology Service



**Robyn Stephens**  
Assistant EP and  
MHFA Trainer



**Hazel Loomes:**  
Admin Officer EPS



**Cate Wilkes:** Senior  
EP and Acting EPS  
Lead



**Kate Pike:** Senior  
EP, Acting Mental  
Health Lead &  
Manager of MHST



**Dr Wendy Sillitoe:**  
Senior EP and  
MHST Lead.



**Dr Beth Cartwright:**  
Senior EP and  
Manager of TTST



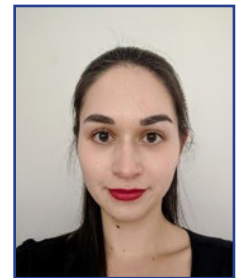
**Dr Neal Ridley:**  
Senior EP and  
MHST Lead



**Dr Amy Bushell** EP



**Dr Samantha  
Broomfield:**  
EP and EBSA Lead



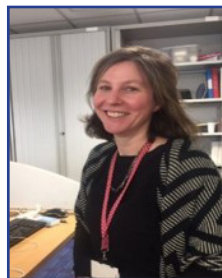
**Dr Felicity Ang:** EP  
and CiC Lead



**Elinor Kelly EP:**  
EP and ELSA Lead



**Dr Georgia Lovell  
EP:** Early Years Lead



**Fiona Richards:** EP,  
EPIT Supervisor and  
MHFA Trainer

*This Service Guide shows some of the creative ways we can work in partnership with your school community and we hope this is of interest to you.*

*The EPS also works in partnership with other services within the Social and Emotional Mental Health Service including the Mental Health Support Team, Emotional Health Academy and Therapeutic Thinking Support Team. This ensures that your support is well integrated within the local authority context.*

*We look forward to working with you in 2023-24.*

**Dr. Michelle Sancho** BSc, PGCE, PG Diploma in  
Evidence-Based Psychological Treatment for Children  
and Young People, MSc, DEd Psy, AFBPsS, C Psychol,  
HPC Registered Psychologist  
Interim Head of Education Services

**Cate Wilkes** BSc Hons, PGCE, MSc, C Psychol, HCPC  
Registered Psychologist  
**Acting EPS Lead and Senior Educational  
Psychologist**

Our work includes the following:

### Consultation with teachers, parents/ carers and other adults who work with children or young people

Consultation with an Educational Psychologist (EP) can take different forms, depending upon the need for support which is identified. Discussion often focuses upon problem solving, which leads to a specific outcome from the consultation. This may be highlighting specific strategies for implementation, signposting to other support, suggesting an appropriate intervention or further assessment.

Consultation is not limited to work for individual pupils. Some schools choose to use consultation effectively to make progress with organisational issues in school. This may include classroom management strategies or considering support for teaching assistants.

Information provided in the 'Consultation Request' form is crucial to making the most effective use of a consultation.

### Monitoring and Review

Monitoring and review is an important part of establishing exactly which interventions and approaches are successful in a variety of contexts. For this reason a 'Monitoring & Review' session should be booked in for any children assessed by an EP.

Monitoring and Review may include considering strategies and recommendations from previous involvement and a review of interventions before agreeing future plans.

In other instances, monitoring and review may lead to other outcomes such as identification of training needs, or assessment and intervention from an EP.



# Individual Approaches

## Individual psychological assessments and advice

Following initial discussions, it may be necessary for the EP to carry out a more enhanced assessment. This will often be when the setting requires additional support to understand and meet a child's more complex needs which are presenting a significant barrier to their learning/emotional well-being and inclusion.

Psychological assessments can take many forms and may include some, but not necessarily all, of the following activities:

- observation(s) of the child in their learning/home environments
- collaborative problem-solving consultations following a 'Plan, Do, Review' approach - a process involving school staff, family and other professionals
- child-centred approaches (e.g. PATHs) to ensure that the child is at the centre of decisions made about their future
- targeted individual assessment with a child to explore specific or multiple areas of their development. This may involve the use of psychometric assessments that aim to assess the level of a child's skills and abilities or dynamic assessments which aim to explore how a child learns and how they respond to intervention. It may also include exploring the child's perspective about themselves, others and their learning environment (e.g. through the use of scaling approaches, the Ideal-Self activity etc.) and the use of standardised questionnaires to gain the perspectives of all those involved in supporting a child about a specific developmental area (e.g. social skills or executive functioning).

The EP will then support school staff, the family and other professionals to consider the different perspectives and the range of factors which impact on a child's emotional well-being and ability to engage with the

learning environment. A set of appropriate interventions and support can then be developed. Following a 'Plan, Do, Review' cycle, a review meeting would be expected in the following term to consider the effectiveness of strategies and monitor progress. The EP will produce a report following completion of casework.

## Intervention support with children and young people, families and staff

Assessment work may conclude that individual therapeutic intervention is appropriate for a child/young person who presents with a complex range of difficulties. We are also able to work with staff over time.

EPs are qualified to deliver a range of therapeutic interventions which have been successfully evaluated. Work over several sessions will be based on one of the following approaches:

- **CBT informed work**
- **Compassion Focused Therapy**
- **Motivational Interviewing**
- **Solution-Focused Brief Therapy**
- **Positive Psychology**
- **Video Interaction Guidance (VIG)**
- **Mindfulness**
- **Selective mutism. Supporting children who present as selectively mute**
- **Anxiety and Low Mood Depression**

The number of sessions required will be dependent on need and intervention type, identified by the psychologist. A report may be requested following intervention.

## Group Approaches

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### Coping With Worries Primary

A whole class intervention for Year 6 students using cognitive behavioural approaches with follow up activities provided for teachers to deliver.

**3 x 1.5 hours**

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### Coping With Worries Secondary

Whole year screening to identify students experiencing significant anxiety difficulties followed by eight small group sessions for targeted students from Year 7 and/or Year 8 students. Includes an individual student session, a group parent information session and feedback to schools regarding student progress.

**Approximately 15 hours**

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### Managing Exam Stress

A small group Year 11, 12 or 13 student intervention using cognitive behavioural, compassion focused and mindfulness techniques to be used in preparation for and during exams. Additionally, a whole year assembly and a parent session are also available.

**3 x 1.5 hours**

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### 90 minute introduction to mindfulness for staff

Studies of school mindfulness programmes provide evidence that they have the potential to improve some pupils' behaviour, psychological health and wellbeing, and executive functioning including attention and behaviour. Research studies indicate that the benefits can include feeling calmer and more positive, helping cope with stress and anxiety, improving concentration and focus and getting along better with others.

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### .breathe

The .breathe curriculum is a 4 session programme aimed at the school 'transition' years. It is particularly well suited to pupils aged 9-14 facing transition: from primary to secondary, through puberty, from lockdown back to school. It explores the ways in which mindfulness might support pupils through this often difficult period.

This 4 session programme explores the following areas:

- Working with the capacity of attention: exploring how we can work with a wandering mind
- Why humans worry and how to support ourselves when we do
- Sleep – why it is important and what to do if we struggle to sleep well
- Being with others – the opportunities and challenges of working skilfully with friendships

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## Circle of Friends

'Circle of Friends' is used to promote the inclusion of individuals who face exclusion, rejection and isolation from their peers because of their disability, behaviour or some other individual difference. The approach supports the focus child by enlisting the help of a peer group drawn from the whole class which is established as a special group/circle of friends. This group helps to set, monitor and review weekly targets in a meeting facilitated by an adult.

Includes a **1 hour whole class session**. **6 x half hour small group sessions** of targeted intervention could be run by the EP or the EP could support school staff.

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## Therapeutic Storywriting © (7-13 year olds)

Therapeutic Storywriting Groups use the metaphor in stories to support children whose emotional and behavioural difficulties are impacting on their learning. Research suggests that this intervention helps pupils to process difficult feelings, develop social skills and improve pupils' engagement with writing.

**10 x 1 hour sessions**

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## PATHs (Planning Alternative Tomorrows with Hope)

A PATH (Pearpoint, O'Brien, & Forest, 1993) is a person centered approach which explores the possibilities of a different future for a child. It places the child at the centre of the process and draws on the support of all those who know and care for them to help them to imagine a different future and to think backwards from this future possibility to consider how that possibility might come to be. The session is run by two facilitators and recorded in a colourful graphic which charts the journey from the preferred future, as imagined by the child, to the present situation considering the resources that are needed to support the child to navigate their way to a future point a few months away. The PATH process ends with an outcome of first (beginning) steps that are possible and positive. It is a process that places an emphasis on what is needed to support a child as opposed to focusing on their difficulties or deficits and can often be an emotionally uplifting and positive experience for all those involved.

**Approximately 4 – 6 hours**

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## Staff Support

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### Circle of Adults

'Circle of Adults' offers emotional support and advice to professionals working with emotionally challenging individual children. The approach is used to facilitate staff discussions to develop a clearer understanding of problematic behaviour and develop defined actions and next steps to move the situation forward.

**Approximately 1.5 – 2 hours**

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### Solution Circles

A structured, outcome-focused process, which helps individuals or teams problem solve difficult and challenging situations. The approach helps build 'community capacity' as it demonstrates that others within the community have the knowledge and skills to help, if they are asked.

**Typically half an hour per problem presented.**

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### Emotional Literacy Support Assistant Supervision

ELSA training provides the skills and understanding for nurturing and supporting the emotional wellbeing of children and young people. It recognises that children learn better and are happier in school if their emotional needs are addressed. In order to practise, ELSAs require regular group supervision by an Educational Psychologist.

**6 x 2 hourly sessions over an academic year.**

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### Staff Coaching

Staff coaching involves having purposeful, solution focused individual conversations to promote performance and effectiveness in the classroom.

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### Video Enhanced Reflective Practice (VERP)

Participants are trained and assisted to edit their own video footage and feedback to colleagues. The overall aim is to enhance participants understanding of successful interactions which will promote and enhance successful teaching and learning.

**Group / individual delivery 6-9 hours**

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### Staff Drop-ins

Pre-agreed slots can be arranged with your link Educational Psychologist to meet with individual members of staff to talk about issues or concerns in a short focused discussion.

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### Video Interaction Guidance (VIG)

VIG is a strength based approach using video to support change and improve interaction and communication at home or at school. Video clips are used to show what you are doing well and enhances those skills which can benefit relationships, learning and behaviour.

**Approximately 9 hours**

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## Mental Health First Aid

We have a number of qualified Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) Instructors in the team who can deliver a range of MHFA courses (ranging from half a day to two days). The two day course would train participants as Mental Health First Aiders.

MHFA is a training course which teaches people how to identify, understand and help someone who may be experiencing a mental health issue. MHFA won't teach you to be a therapist, but it will teach you to listen, reassure and respond, even in a crisis – and even potentially stop a crisis from happening.

You'll learn to recognise warning signs of mental ill health, and develop the skills and confidence to approach and support someone while keeping yourself safe.

You'll also learn how to empower someone to access the support they might need for recovery or successful management of symptoms. This could include self-help books or websites, accessing therapy services through their GP, their school or place of work, online self-referral, support groups, and more.

What's more, you'll gain an understanding of how to support positive wellbeing and tackle stigma in the world around you.

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## Parent Support

### Video Interaction Guidance (VIG)

VIG is a strength based approach using video to support change and improve interaction and communication at home or at school. Video clips are used to show what you are doing well and enhances those skills which can benefit relationships, learning and behaviour.

**Approximately 9 hours**

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## Paired Reading project

Paired Reading is a technique which aims to help children who are not confident reading alone. It helps children develop their fluency by not focusing on errors. It has been shown to be an effective intervention to improve fluency and comprehension and increase confidence in children.

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## Parent Drop-ins

Pre-agreed slots can be arranged with your link Educational Psychologist to meet with individual members of staff to talk about issues or concerns in a short focused discussion.

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## Bespoke Parent Workshops

These can be tailored to meet the needs of your parent group and could include sessions such as 'Supporting Your Child's Wellbeing' and 'Children's Development'.



## Strategic Support

### Therapeutic Thinking (TT)

Therapeutic Thinking recognises that all behaviour is communication and seeks to understand the feelings motivating the behaviour. Therefore the aim of the approach is to respond to individual needs and promote prosocial feelings for all.

A strong school ethos and value system underpins the Therapeutic approach. As staff model the therapeutic values in their actions and language, all children are encouraged to be caring, supportive and develop strong relationships. Staff support children through positive learning experiences, promoting self-esteem and self-worth through the recognition of potential and effort. The aim is for mutually respectful, positive relationships with pupils to be developed to support the use of positive behaviour management strategies.

Some children will have risk factors in their lives meaning that they are more likely to have negative feelings, and thus, display negative behaviours. Whilst an educational setting cannot eradicate all the risk factors a child may have experienced or be experiencing, it can look to ensure the child has as many protective factors and positive experiences as possible, in order to create more positive feelings within them. In order to support the implementation and progression of Therapeutic Thinking, as a team we offer all schools the opportunity to benefit from additional support at no cost through providing, a termly TT newsletter, termly TT network meetings.

TT training is available online. The online training is a flexible approach, split in to 18 modules, and is delivered over 5 days. The training includes the opportunity to discuss the approach with LA colleagues and other delegates through regular use of break out spaces. Please contact the service for details of costs.

### Bespoke Consultation/Project/ Training/Research commission

Educational Psychologists have extensive skills and knowledge in facilitating change at different levels, whether it is for individual children, young people and families or with groups of staff and whole teams in organisations like schools.

Topics might include:

- **SEN and inclusion**
- **Strategies for vulnerable groups of pupils in school**
- **Teaching and learning**
- **Positive behaviour management and pastoral care**
- **Evaluating the impact of interventions you use**
- **Skills audits, bespoke training packages, coaching and staff groups**
- **Small scale research to help you understand your school**
- **Engaging parents.**

## Statutory Work

Once an Education, Health and Care assessment has been agreed and initiated by the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities panel, preparation of psychological advice in accordance with the Children and Families Act (2014) for children undergoing statutory assessment of their special educational needs is not chargeable.



## Professional development and training

The Educational Psychology Service can offer training to individuals, groups or whole staff. Information Sessions for Parents – Many of the training sessions available may be offered for parents as shorter information sessions.

Examples of training on offer:

### Cognition & Learning / Learning & Development

- Using Assessments Effectively
- Supporting SEN in the Classroom (for Teachers)
- Levels of Assistance (for TAs)
- Child Development
- Early Years training e.g. gender differences
- Growth and Fixed Mindset
- Neuropsychology and the Learning Brain
- Neuropsychology and the Teenage Brain
- Executive Functioning, Memory and Attention
- Promoting Working Memory in the classroom
- Metacognition
- Paired Reading
- Reciprocal Teaching
- Precision Teaching

### Social, Emotional & Mental Health

- Attachment
- Protective Behaviours: a practical approach to personal safety
- Reducing Risk & Building Resilience
- Understanding and Managing Anxiety
- Managing Exam Stress
- Self Harm
- Mental Health First Aid ©
- Promoting Positive Behaviour
- Social Communication & Autistic Spectrum Disorder
- ADD & ADHD
- ELSA
- Supporting Emotional Wellbeing (for teachers)
- Therapeutic Thinking
- Creating small gardens
- Creating Compassionate Schools
- Positive Psychology
- Supporting Military Families
- Grief & Loss
- Video Interaction Guidance

### Other training available

- Person Centred Approaches
- Gender Identity

## Packages

There are a number of annual packages to choose from according to your type of school and level of need. These range from 3 to 40 days of Educational Psychology time.

- Includes a free remote planning meeting with an Educational Psychologist
- Cost includes preparation, on site visits and report writing.
- Additional days over and above the package or ad hoc services can be purchased separately.

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### Aa Academy Schools **£1,700.00**

3 days (6 sessions/18 hours). *Only suitable for small schools.*

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### A Academy Schools **£3,399.00**

6 days (12 sessions/36 hours).

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### B Academy Schools **£5,099.00**

9 days (18 sessions/54 hours).

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### C Academy Schools **£6,798.00**

12 days (24 sessions/72 hours).

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### D Academy Schools **£11,330.00**

20 days (40 sessions/120 hours).

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### E Academy Schools **£16,995.00**

30 days (60 sessions/180 hours).

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### F Academy Schools **£22,660.00**

40 days (80 sessions/240 hours).

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### Bespoke

Available for schools individually or as part of a multi-academy trust.

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Costs for additional days, over and above the purchased package are:

- **£618 per day**
- **£721 per day** if no annual package has been purchased.

Availability of additional days is subject to capacity and needs to be requested as an ad hoc service through SLA Online.

## WBC Educational Psychology Service

Contact:

**Hazel Loomes**

Social Inclusion Admin Officer

Educational Psychology Service

Market Street, Newbury

External: **01635 519026** Internal: **2026**

Email: **hazel.loomes@westberks.gov.uk**

