



Educational Psychology, Early Years Inclusion and Wellbeing

Providing vital support to children, families and schools

By Andrea Morgan, Principal Educational Psychologist



Every day, I am inspired by the dedication, kindness, knowledge and skills of the practitioners within the services that I oversee. My services are Educational Psychology, Early Years Inclusion and Wellbeing.

As the landscape of SEND and Inclusion continues to evolve, we are determined to keep children and young people at the centre of all that we do, ensuring a consistent and effective service for the families and settings that need us.

Please reach out to the services below if you would like any further information about the work that they do and how they can further support you and your setting.

Educational Psychology Service

Through the application of psychology, we promote the educational, social and emotional development of children and young people. Using person-centred approaches, we undertake psychological assessments for children and young people who are undergoing an EHCNA. In addition to our statutory role, we also provide support and guidance to schools and parents via school consultation meetings and telephone consultations.

On occasion, schools are impacted by [sad events or incidents](#) that have the potential to cause trauma. The EPS provide swift support to schools to help them support their community to manage these events and reflect on and support the emotional impact on themselves. We also produce guidance documents for schools and other professionals, such as [Emotionally Based School Avoidance](#) and [My Wellbeing and Safety Plans](#).

If you require further support, or if you have any queries for the Educational Psychology Service, please email eps@westsussex.gov.uk.

Early Years Service

Portage

Portage is an early years home visiting educational service for children with additional support needs.

We work alongside parents and other professionals, offering practical strategies and ideas to encourage and develop a child's emerging skills. These include communication, moving, learning, playing, being with people, sensory and emotional regulation, and sharing the routine activities of everyday life. We value children and their families, and always look to celebrate their unique qualities.



"I feel so blessed to have received Portage support over the last few weeks. The home visitor is so kind and patient and without judgement. My child has really enjoyed the interactions and I have benefitted from witnessing these interactions and her explanations and feedback."

Portage builds on what a child **can** do, and a typical home visit incorporates child led play, structured teaching and a family focus.

For further information, or to request support for children joining your school, please email cypsportagechichester@westsussex.gov.uk.

Wellbeing Services

Whole school approaches and Thriving in Education

Promoting children and young people's mental health and wellbeing is essential to ensure positive outcomes for their futures. Children and young people spend a significant amount of time in school, so it's vital that schools are mentally healthy environments, and that staff are trained and supported to promote positive mental health and identify young people who need some additional support.

Our work in this area is underpinned by 2 national frameworks:

1. [The Thrive Framework for System Change](#), developed by the Anna Freud National Centre for Children and Families
2. [Promoting children and young people's mental health and wellbeing: a whole school approach](#)

Both frameworks are strengths-based because most CYP are thriving. For young people who need some additional support, the frameworks promote earliest identification and intervention, with this support being provided from school and from familiar individuals that they know and trust.

We recognise that support pathways can seem unclear and that best practice is not always widely known. We are taking the following steps to support children and young people and those who work with them:

- Our work is steered by the Thriving in Education Strategy Group
- We have developed mental health support teams (MHST), which support the mental health and emotional wellbeing of children and young people in schools
- We have launched [Thriving in Education](#), a website designed to signpost and guide those who work with children and young people with mental or emotional health concerns
- We encourage all schools to identify a senior mental health lead (SMHL), and to support them to access DfE funded training. Uptake of this training is over 78% in West Sussex, which is above the regional and national average



Thought-Full

The [Thought-Full service](#) fulfils 3 core functions:

1. Supporting the senior mental health lead in each education setting to introduce or develop their whole school or college approach
2. Delivering evidence-based interventions in schools for mild to moderate mental health issues
3. Giving timely advice to school and college staff, and liaising with external specialist services, to help children and young people to get the right support and stay in education

Thought-Full is part of the national roll out of mental health support teams (MHSTs) in schools. The name, 'Thought-Full', was chosen by children and young people in West Sussex, along with our strap line: 'helping you thinking it through.'

We work with schools to identify need in their setting, using the whole school approach wheel which was developed by Public Health England. We use a mixture of training, workshops, lessons, assemblies, therapeutic one-to-one support and consultations to meet the identified need.

"Thank you so much for all you have done with (my child). It's been wonderful seeing the positive change in him. I am grateful that he had someone that he felt he could trust and connect with, and the progress he has made speaks volumes about how valuable this has been to him."

If you have any questions about the services that Thought-Full delivers in West Sussex schools, please email thought-full@westsussex.gov.uk.