

# Information for Children and Young People

## What is an Educational Psychologist?

Educational psychologists work for the Council and help children and young people who have difficulties which affect their education.

To become an educational psychologist you need to have a degree in psychology and a further, higher qualification in educational psychology. Usually you also have to have had some experience working with children and young people.

A lot of the educational psychologist's time is spent in schools, getting to know the staff and pupils so that they are in a good position to offer advice when it is asked for.



## What do they do?

That really depends on what they have been asked to do! Sometimes it will involve talking with a pupil about the things that might be bothering them, to try and help them better deal with their problems. They may also talk with parents to provide them with advice about how to help their child. At other times, it might be to help teachers find better ways of helping someone with their learning or behaviour in class. They are also involved in running groups in schools, helping with teacher training, and looking at new ways of working with children and young people.

When working with a pupil, the psychologist will often spend some time in their class, looking at how they are managing their work and getting on with their class-mates. They may also look at their class work to see if they can suggest other materials which will be easier or will help overcome a difficulty. Sometimes the psychologist will bring their own reading books and materials to work with you. This can help the psychologist to see more clearly and precisely what your difficulty might be. They also work closely with other people who are interested in a pupil's progress.



## How do they become involved?

An educational psychologist will only become involved in working with you if your parents or carers agree to this happening. If you are 12 years of age or older you can ask to see an educational psychologist. To begin with, there will be a discussion between everybody concerned, usually you, your family and teachers, about what your difficulties are, and what is already being done or planned to help you.

If, after this meeting it is clear that an educational psychologist would be helpful, then they will meet with you and explain exactly what will happen next. For example, when they will start, what they'll be doing and how long it might last. You'll have a chance to ask questions about this.

## What happens after that?

After the psychologist has been working with you for a while, they will share with you and everyone else involved in helping you, what they have found out. This information is then used by your teachers and anyone else who helps you, to draw up a plan of action.

After this meeting you may not meet with the psychologist again, or you may see him or her a year later when it is time to look at your plan again. A file containing information about the psychologist's work with you will be kept by the psychologist, and you, or your parents, have the right to see this. However, most of it will already have been shared with you and those involved in working with you.



## Who can I speak to about this?

If you want more information about who the psychologist is for your school and what they do, you can ask to speak to your guidance or learning support teacher. They can also arrange for you to meet with your school psychologist.

You can also telephone the psychological service department directly and ask to speak to a psychologist.

## Further information

Contact:

**Liz Gajjar**  
**Ogilvie House**  
**Ogilvie Way**  
**Knightsridge**  
**Livingston EH**

**Tel: 01506 775800**



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**West Lothian  
Council**

Education & Cultural Services