



# Cognus

No Limits on Learning

# EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY IN ACTION

Our Educational Psychology Service (EPS) works collaboratively with children, families, schools, and multi-agency partners to promote inclusion, wellbeing, and learning.



**These case studies showcase the breadth and depth of our work**

From supporting emotional regulation and social skills development to delivering trauma-informed training and systemic consultation.

Each example reflects our commitment to evidence-based practice, tailored interventions, and meaningful outcomes for the children and communities we serve.

## EPS CASE STUDY

### BRIEF DESCRIPTION

- Centre based fully funded training for school staff
- 3 hour training session designed to compliment and extend the work being completed as part of the BSF programme
- Based on theories of attachment-aware and trauma-informed practices
- Focused on describing and exploring relational approaches as alternatives to other behaviour management approaches

### IMPACT

- Attended by over 40 delegates from a range of different schools
- Input for staff from primary and secondary
- Delivered to a range of staff including some SLT, SENCOs and pastoral staff
- Resulted in an energetic session with lots of active engagement from participants, questions and discussion
- Shared practice with the MHST who attended

### EVIDENCE OF IMPACT

- 100% of the evaluations were either satisfied or very satisfied with the training
- All responses were 'extremely agree' to the statements 'the EP delivered the training in a clear and easy-to-understand manner', 'the EP thoroughly answered questions'
- One evaluation read 'Dr Suchy was very knowledgeable and it was fascinating listening to her talk around the subject'

### REFLECTIONS/NEXT STEPS

- Can be used by EPs in BSF schools to extend the work
- Can be used to set the groundwork for implementation of relational policies – linking in with the exemplar policy created by Kate
- Session could actually be a whole day, and if being delivered as whole school INSET would suggest this – several evaluations stated that more time would have made the session even better
- One evaluation stated 'It would have been good to have time to consider implementation'
- One evaluation stated 'Although always great to hear about other schools, I feel it would be better to have a session for secondary schools and one for primary perhaps'



### AT A GLANCE

#### IMPACT

- Improved understanding of relational approaches
- High engagement and positive feedback
- Strengthened multi-agency collaboration

#### NEXT STEPS

- Expand session to full-day INSET
- Separate sessions for primary / secondary

**Relational approaches centre based training - to upskill school staff in understanding and implementing a relational approach at the systemic level**

**FOCUS: Training**

## EPS CASE STUDY

### BRIEF DESCRIPTION

- Concerns surrounding child: attention, impulsivity, social skills, emotional regulation.
- School involved EP after EHCP assessment was declined.
- ADHD medication led to school-reported improvements, but parents worried about masking.
- Child was new to Sutton EP Service.
- I carried out observations, consultations with key adults and direct session.
- Initial focus: understanding worry and managing anxiety.
- Positive response from child led to term-long extension, replacing music therapy.
- CBT-informed sessions covered emotional regulation, automatic negative thoughts (ANTs), coping with change, and ADHD psychoeducation.

### IMPACT

- Strong school-home-EPS collaboration, enabling joint problem-solving.
- Consistent meeting space supported child's sense of safety.
- Flexible, child-centred approach, including outdoor activities.
- Observations and consultations ensured well-targeted sessions.
- Classroom observations provided insight into different settings.
- Ongoing parent-school check-ins enabled real-time strategy sharing.
- Gradual ending approach eased transition.
- Handover to ELSA for continuity of support.
- Scheduling consistency was difficult due to workload.
- Sustainability concerns as intervention relied on ASC funding.
- Some parental concerns remained, requiring ongoing support.
- Need to reinforce strategy generalisation beyond sessions.
- Delayed ASC funding caused challenges.

### EVIDENCE OF IMPACT

- Ongoing feedback from home and school.
- Fewer emotional dysregulation incidents at school over time.
- Less classroom avoidance and an increased use of agreed strategies.
- Smoother transition to Year 3.
- Reduced anxiety at home, but bedtime worries remained.
- School actively using personalised Zones of Regulation in the classroom



### REFLECTIONS

#### What Worked Well:

- Strong home-school-EP communication.
- Flexible sessions with support staff/child.
- Gradual step-down via ELSA continuation.

#### Key Considerations:

- Ensure consistent session timing for predictability.
- Use pre/post feedback measures, not just qualitative input.
- Develop intervention resource packages for ELSAs while keeping sessions bespoke.

### AT A GLANCE

#### IMPACT

- Improved emotional regulation and school engagement.
- Stronger home-school collaboration and strategy use

#### NEXT STEPS

- Establish consistent session scheduling.
- Develop ELSA resource packs with bespoke elements.

**Intervention sessions to help child understand worries and develop regulation strategies, particularly in relation to ADHD**

**FOCUS: Intervention**



## EPS CASE STUDY

### BRIEF DESCRIPTION

- The work was part of traded EP hours
- This child has difficulties in emotional regulation, attention, and social interactions at home and school.
- They exhibit impulsivity, frequent emotional outbursts, and struggles with transitions and changes in routine.
- In school, they seek adult attention, displays disruptive behaviour's, and has difficulty focusing on tasks.
- I carried out a classroom observation and consulted with mother, class teacher, and school SENCo.
- I liaised with the Mental Health Support Team as Mum is getting their support.
- I met with the child twice for direct work and used sentence completion cards to understand their views.
- I used BYI subscales for concerns around anger and oppositional behaviour's, and kinetic family drawing due to trauma history.
- I used attachment theory, Geddes learning triangle, and the PACE model in the psychological formulation.
- The goal was to understand their perception of the family dynamic and provide strategies for school and home to support them.

### IMPACT

- I used trauma-informed assessments and strategies tailored to the child's needs, focusing on emotional regulation and engagement.
- Staff and parent gained a clearer understanding of their triggers and emotional needs, leading to improved consistency in responses and support.
- The importance of a holistic approach, combining emotional and academic support, was reinforced.
- Strategies introduced, such as PACE and structured routines, can be extended to support other vulnerable children within the school setting.

### EVIDENCE OF IMPACT

- Parent thanked me for listening; felt heard for the first time.
- SENCo found the observations interesting and helpful

### REFLECTIONS/NEXT STEPS

- More targeted follow-up sessions and parental involvement could strengthen outcomes.
- Discussing with SENCo about delivering therapeutic play-based sessions with mum and child.



### AT A GLANCE

#### IMPACT

- Trauma-informed strategies improved emotional regulation and engagement; staff and parent better understand triggers.
- Parent felt heard; SENCo found the assessment helpful.
- PACE and structured routines support emotional and academic needs, extendable to other children.

#### NEXT STEPS

- More targeted follow-ups and parental involvement could strengthen outcomes.
- Discussing therapeutic play sessions with SENCo.

**Addressing emotional and behavioural challenges in a child and working with the school and parent to support them.**

**FOCUS:** Consultation and assessment

## EPS CASE STUDY



### BRIEF DESCRIPTION

- Aims: Increase understanding of their ADHD diagnosis, develop management strategies, co-produce a working document for future use.
- Commissioned by Sutton secondary school using EPS hours.
- 5 sessions (15 hours total) focused on ADHD challenges, strengths, and strategies (attention, impulsivity, hyperactivity, emotional control).
- Students: 3 Year 11 students recently diagnosed with ADHD (2 Asian British, 1 White British)
- First session: overview of ADHD and neurodiversity.
- Final session: SWOT analysis with each student.
- Used the 'Understanding ADHD' workbook as a guide for discussion and target setting between sessions.
- Each student identified strategies related to an aspect of their ADHD to try out independently, which were reviewed in the following session.
- Limited communication with families and school out of respect of confidentiality; shared one safeguarding concern and general feedback with SENCo.
- Psychological approaches: ADHD knowledge, motivational interviewing, solution-focused questioning, scaling, CBT.

### IMPACT

- Used active listening, empathy, reflecting skills to attune with young people, making them feel safe and engaged.
- Strengths-based intervention focused on students' interests/skills, positively impacting self-esteem/self-image.
- Students identified targets to work on between sessions, which were emailed to them, encouraging their value.
- Motivational interviewing illuminated change talk, helping engage a less receptive student.
- CBT helped students understand anxiety and introduced relaxation and mindfulness techniques.
- Two students initially sceptical about relaxation techniques became more curious and open to using them.
- Two students reported using breathing exercises to manage anxiety in mock exams.

### EVIDENCE OF IMPACT

- School felt the young people benefited greatly from the intervention.
- Students' understanding and confidence in discussing their ADHD increased.
- School was happy with the intervention's impact and requested more sessions for other students.

### REFLECTIONS

- More checking in with staff and discussions with students about sharing intervention details could increase teacher understanding and support.
- Feedback about the intervention's success in an EPS Team meeting.
- School's interest in more sessions and group workshops for Year 13 students with anxiety, ADHD, and autism due to the intervention's success.

### AT A GLANCE IMPACT

- Strong attunement with young people, making them feel safe and engaged.
- Strengths-based intervention boosted students' confidence in discussing ADHD.
- School requested more sessions.

### NEXT STEPS

- Increase check-ins with staff and discuss sharing details with students to enhance teacher support.
- Plan group workshops for Year 13 students with anxiety, ADHD, and autism.

Understanding  
ADHD diagnosis  
Intervention

FOCUS: Intervention



## EPS CASE STUDY

### BRIEF DESCRIPTION

- Aim: To provide strategies and support to try and prevent emotionally based school non-attendance
- The work was part of traded EP hours
- Student: Year 6, White British male who spoke English
- Consultation with SENDCO and Class Teacher.
- Consultation with Parents; mother concerned own anxiety influencing their son; signposted to additional support.
- 1:1 session with child; used "Chill, Chat, Challenge" cards to understand them/their views and their feelings about their subjects/aspirations.
- Planning meeting with SENDCO and planning meeting with Parent and reading the report due to reading difficulties.
- Next steps meeting with SENDCO, parents, maternal grandmother, my supervisor, following a parental EHCP receiving a no to assess
- Assessment work: completed a PATH with the young person.
- Recommendations included: Incorporating Growth mindset principles, paired writing intervention, relational approaches, restorative justice principles and encouraging restorative conversations, providing a key-worker to support young person when he is dysregulated (e.g., through co-regulation).

### IMPACT

- Effectively explored young person's views using PATH method.
- Clarified young person's thoughts, e.g., lack of reference for secondary school.
- Learned to use PATH in 1:1 setting; previously used in staff training.
- Gained insight into next steps meeting process.
- Considered other strategies for young people struggling with learning, like emotion push toy

### EVIDENCE OF IMPACT

- Verbal feedback on child's progress has been provided and a review will occur at the end of the spring term.

### REFLECTIONS/ NEXT STEPS

- PATH was effective in gaining young person's views, especially areas they struggle with.
- Used a holistic approach, considering parents' anxiety and its influence on the young person.
- Next steps meeting was challenging as it was my first time; report/input occurred after submission, limiting my knowledge.
- Parents were concerned about mock SATs performance; reassuring that interventions take time and other strategies were in place.



### REFLECTIONS CONT.

- Could have explored academic levels further with additional assessments (dynamic or cognitive tests).
- Good practice shared via report; could discuss effective strategies with supervisor/other EPs.
- Prompted to consider including EBSA as a topic for the upcoming parent workshop.

### AT A GLANCE

#### IMPACT

- Explored young person's views using PATH; clarified thoughts like lack of reference for secondary school.
- Learned to use PATH in 1:1 setting; gained insight into next steps meeting.
- Considered strategies like emotion push toy

#### NEXT STEPS

- Discuss effective strategies with supervisor and other EPs; consider including EBSA in upcoming parent workshop.
- Explore academic levels further with additional assessments.

**Emotionally Based  
School Avoidance  
(EBSA) prevention**

**FOCUS:** Assessment /  
Consultation

## EPS CASE STUDY

### BRIEF DESCRIPTION

- Aim: help child to form social connections, reduce maladaptive behaviours, and ensure appropriate support.
- The work was part of traded EP hours
- Student: A 13 year old (Year 9) with social, emotional, and behavioural challenges at a specialist setting who is being educated separately from his peers.
- Conducted observations, consultations, and gathered family insights to understand child's needs and identify support strategies.
- Worked with child, family, school staff, and professionals to assess needs and develop support plans.
- Used evidence-based practices (Social Stories, TEACCH, Zones of Regulation) for interventions.

### IMPACT

- Provided observations, emotional regulation strategies, and educational support recommendations, which was well-received by staff.
- Recommended EHCP amendments for tailored social, emotional, and behavioural support; EHCP coordinator considered new placements.
- Learned child's behaviours stemmed from unmet social needs and lack of peer connections, highlighting the need to address these.
- Reviewing and amending the EHCP led to a more individualised support approach with clearer goals for social integration and emotional regulation.

### EVIDENCE OF IMPACT

- Amendments to Child's EHCP led to clearer focus on social, emotional, and behavioural support, with regular review meetings.
- After strategies implemented; the class teacher reported improved emotional regulation, especially when child uses tools like the squishy ball to self-regulate.

### REFLECTIONS / NEXT STEPS

- Amendments to Child's EHCP led to a more tailored support plan, improving staff's understanding of his needs. Increased awareness of his need for social connection was successful.
- Emotional regulation strategies worked, but social interaction with peers remains challenging due to developmental differences.



### REFLECTIONS CONT.

- More frequent peer interactions could have better addressed his social needs.
- Staff were briefed on the amended EHCP and strategies, including visual schedules and social stories. A follow-up meeting with the EHCP coordinator was held.

### AT A GLANCE IMPACT

- Strategies and recommendations were well-received.
- EHCP amendments clarified goals for social integration and emotional regulation.
- Addressing social needs improved emotional regulation.

### NEXT STEPS

- More frequent peer interactions could have better addressed his social needs.

**Supporting a child to navigate social and emotional challenges in a specialist setting**

**FOCUS:** Consultation



## EPS CASE STUDY

### BRIEF DESCRIPTION

- A primary school requested the EP run a social skills group after a needs analysis at the start of the academic year.
- Due to limited traded hours but high need of children in year 6, causing disruptions with racist and misogynistic behaviours, an intervention was agreed.
- Six Year 6 boys from vulnerable families were referred to the group, with parental consent received.
- The EP conducted 6 weekly 60-minute sessions focusing on emotional and social skills development.
- Emotional screeners were sent to parents and completed by the boys in the first session.
- Sessions included activities and strategies like regulation techniques, mindfulness, breathing, and social cues.
- The EP provided weekly feedback to class teachers, the head teacher, and/or SENCO.
- Positive psychology, growth mindset principles, and emotion coaching were used.
- Four boys showed noticeable improvements in behaviour and maturity; two struggled with group dynamics.

### IMPACT

- The EP connected well with the boys, who were keen for the group to continue.
- This connection helped the EP understand and share the boys' difficulties with staff.
- Key points: varied individual needs, social communication issues, self-esteem and confidence, and control difficulties.
- Two boys struggled with group access due to lower emotional maturity, leading to discussions on managing them separately at break times.

### EVIDENCE OF IMPACT

- What the boys said of the social skills group:
- "Make me believe in myself more, made me realise I can be quiet, but I find it difficult".
- "Just walk out the room or leave the party when someone's rude to you or when I'm having a bad day".
- "To try calm myself down, the square breathing thing".

### REFLECTIONS / NEXT STEPS

- As the group progressed, the boys opened up about their family breakdowns and related feelings.
- Future focus: address these topics more directly, reduce group size, and match boys by maturity levels.



### REFLECTIONS CONT.

- Quotes from the boys will be shared with school staff for ongoing individualized support.
- One boy, new to the school this term showed literacy difficulties, leading to recommended further assessment and support.

### AT A GLANCE IMPACT

- EP's connection helped share boys' difficulties with staff.
- Issues: varied needs, social communication, self-esteem, confidence, control.
- Discussed managing two boys separately due to lower emotional maturity

### NEXT STEPS

- Address certain topics more directly, reduce group size, and match boys by maturity levels.

**6-Week Social Skills Program for Year 6 Boys: Preparing for Secondary School Transition**

**FOCUS:** Intervention



## EPS CASE STUDY

### BRIEF DESCRIPTION

- Traded work commissioned by a school SENDCO
- The child had no prior involvement with an EP owing to a resistance from parents to accept the child was having any difficulties at school
- The school were concerned about child's academic progress
- An initial consultation with parents and staff highlighted the mother's concerns that people were also aware of her son's strengths as well as any needs identified.
- School raised concerns that he may have difficulties with his STM – I was able to share my knowledge about STM and working memory so they could see the low possibility of there being a STM problem, but the strong possibility of a WM problem.

### IMPACT

- I met the child on a 1:1 basis to identify strengths and needs
- The child's strengths were presented in the report along with identified needs – it was important to the parent that these had been identified.
- In particular, the child had strong decoding skills that could be utilised to support areas of weakness. I recommended paired reading to use his strength in reading and support his comprehension skills
- I also recommended that staff capitalise on strengths found in his short-term visual memory to support WM difficulties identified and slow processing
- An action planning meeting involving both the SENDCo and the mother allowed for a collaborative approach to the agreed strategies and actions

### EVIDENCE OF IMPACT

- A review of the child's progress will occur this term to see the impact of the recommendations.
- The mother was emotional but felt she better understood her child. She now knows his working memory difficulties make it hard for him to follow instructions, so she can help by breaking them down into smaller steps.

### REFLECTIONS / NEXT STEPS

- Conducting an action planning meeting with the parent and SENDCO was a particularly effective way of collaborating and ensuring feasible recommendations
- A review of the case needs to be conducted to evaluate the strategies and any changes that may need to be made.
- Recommendations for staff training around the implementation of some of the interventions may be useful.



### AT A GLANCE

#### IMPACT

- The child's strengths and needs were identified, with strong decoding skills highlighted.
- Paired reading and using short-term visual memory were recommended.
- An action planning meeting led to agreed strategies

#### NEXT STEPS

- Conduct a case review to evaluate strategies and make necessary adjustments.
- Recommend staff training for implementing interventions.

**Addressing  
Academic and  
Emotional Needs**

**FOCUS:** Assessment /  
Consultation

## EPS CASE STUDY



### BRIEF DESCRIPTION

- Commissioned work by Social Worker supporting a mother and her children.
- Children taken into care temporarily.
- Video Interaction Guidance (VIG) requested to help mother improve communication with oldest child.
- Child is a pupil in a Sutton school, receiving support from the Mental Health Support Team.
- Met with Mental Health Support Team colleague for pupil's needs and progress.
- Worked with Family Support Worker for understanding pupil's social and emotional needs.
- VIG support helped parent reflect on child's emotional needs and effective communication during shared activity.

### IMPACT

- Mother's progress was evident by the third Shared Review.
- She showed a significant improvement in understanding the best ways to communicate with her child.
- Increased confidence in her communication abilities.
- She articulated how she was becoming more aware of the positive impact of simple actions, such as listening to others and responding to their needs, in making people feel better

### EVIDENCE OF IMPACT

- At the request of the Social Worker, I wrote a brief report outlining the client's engagement and observed changes in her communication patterns.
- The report was mostly positive, but I recommended that the mother continues her engagement with therapeutic support.
- No feedback on court decision or children's return; expect it to be a long process.
- Mother's response to VIG suggests she's ready to adjust and create a suitable environment for her children.

### REFLECTIONS / NEXT STEPS

- This case is part of the accreditation process, which I aim to complete by March 2025. It's a useful example of effective collaboration with Social Workers to support parents.
- The case highlighted the need to clarify terms, processes, and funding at the outset. It's important to specify the expected outcomes, such as reports or feedback, and what would be helpful for the commissioning service.
- As part of case completion, clients are asked if they want to keep video clips they found helpful. Currently, there's no clear procedure for this, and it needs to be established.

### AT A GLANCE

#### IMPACT

- Significant improvement in communication with her child by the third Shared Review.
- Increased awareness of the positive impact of simple actions like listening and responding.
- Ready to adjust and create a suitable environment for her children despite a long process ahead.

#### NEXT STEPS

- Clarify terms, processes, and funding at the outset.
- Establish a clear procedure for clients to keep helpful video clips.

**Providing a Reflective Space for Parent: Engendering enhanced confidence and awareness**

**FOCUS:** Intervention using VIG



## EPS CASE STUDY

### BRIEF DESCRIPTION

- Aim: To shed greater light on child's learning needs and provision, to meet them within current context
- Work commissioned by school using EP traded
- Student: a child in Year 5
- I carried out parent and teacher consultations, class observation, individual testing with child and provided a written report.
- How did they work with the CYP, family and other partners?
- I worked in collaboration with the child, family and school following an agreed course of action.
- I used a problem solving approach, appropriateness & utility of psychometric testing and integration of knowledge from developmental psychology about how children think and learn

### IMPACT

- A systematic approach taken - to understanding concerns leading to EP request for consultation and advice, individual work following and follow up.
- Questions were answered regarding capacity for learning which enabled further discussion regarding learning needs and support provision
- I gathered information about the child and the barriers to their learning

### EVIDENCE OF IMPACT

- Information from school staff, the parent, and the child indicated that the EP assessment was very helpful in understanding the child's learning needs. This enabled more precisely targeted support for additional needs

### REFLECTIONS / NEXT STEPS

- Systematic approach with timely inclusion with all relevant parties seemed to underpin best outcomes
- Good practice was shared to school via their internal processes
- Teacher and parental surgeries under discussion



### AT A GLANCE

#### IMPACT

- Systematic approach led to EP consultation, individual work, and follow-up.
- Learning capacity questions answered, aiding discussion on needs and support.
- EP assessment helped target support for the child's learning needs.

#### NEXT STEPS

- Teacher and parental surgeries under discussion

**Identification of barriers to learning and provision to meet SEN**

**FOCUS:** Consultation and advice