

<b>Committee</b>	<b>Care Scrutiny Committee</b>
<b>Date</b>	<b>13 September 2018</b>
<b>Title</b>	<b>Autism: Education Service</b>
<b>Cabinet Member</b>	<b>Councillor Gareth Thomas</b>

### Information regarding Additional Learning Needs and Inclusion (ALN & I)

#### 1. How does the autism service provide support for people with autism?

Within the ALN&I Service two main services work together to provide support for children and young people between 0-19 years old with Communication and Interaction Difficulties and Autism - the Educational Psychology Service and the Communication and Interaction Service. The Gwynedd and Anglesey ALN&I Strategy has been operational since September 2017. Although elements of the Services existed previously, the provision for Autism and other aspects of Communication and Interaction have seen an increase in staffing level.

#### **Educational Psychology Service**

##### 1. Aim

The Educational Psychology Service collaborates with Gwynedd and Anglesey schools in order to facilitate a suitable and reasonable response for young people who experience additional learning difficulties, as part of the ALN Integrated Team, where these needs affect the individuals' access to the curriculum. They do this in order to:

- Ensure the best possible educational outcomes for individuals aged between 0 and 25 years old.
- Provide a high quality Service that is in-keeping with the standards of the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC).
- Work in an effective strategic manner to promote whole-school development in the way in which ALN and Inclusion is targeted.

##### 2. Objectives

The aim of the service is to use Psychology to:

- Lead strategically and provide advice on issues relating to ALN and Inclusion on an authority and whole school level to reinforce and upskill schools and parents in response to ALN.
- Promote the developmental, educational, behavioural and emotional skills of individuals aged between 0-25 with consideration given to the welfare of the individual.
- Consult with clients (children/young people, school staff, parents and other agencies) and offer a wide range of specialisms and interventions rooted deeply in Psychology.
- Project work and psychological research to promote good practice and the best outcomes based on current evidence in the field of psychology research (and educational psychology).
- Provide training for staff on subjects relevant to them and in accordance with current developments in the field of psychology and ALN and Inclusion.

##### 3. Indicators

The Educational Psychology Service measures the success and quality of the provision by means of a number of indicators. We list below our main indicators:

- Annual survey of schools' perception by means of a questionnaire.
- Survey of young people's perception through interview or questionnaire.
- Data on pupils' progress which is open to the service according to indicators of specific areas, for instance progress according to achievement indicators, standardised targets and measures, and referral assessment criteria.
- Results of researched projects.
- Survey of perceptions regarding the quality of training offered by the team and how the training has been used.

#### 4. Access to the Educational Psychology Service

Access to the Education Psychology Service's services is possible across the integrated service is dependent on need and service area.

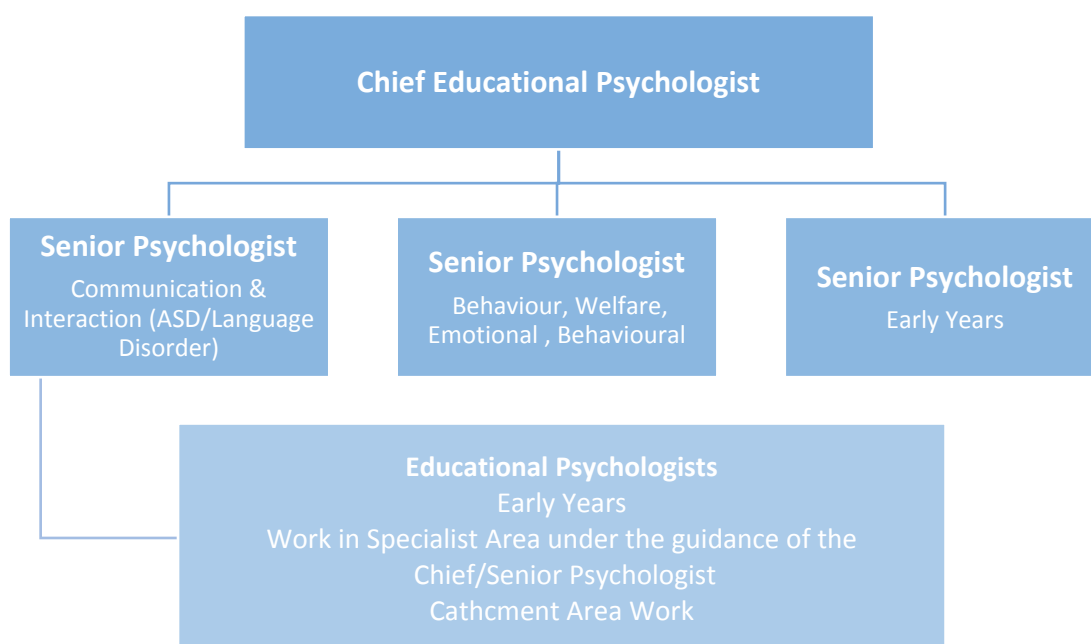
- Every school has a Contact Educational Psychologist, who operates on the level of secondary school catchment area to carry out the work described on the catchment area, whole school or individual pupil level on School Action Plus. This work is carefully planned at the beginning of the school term on catchment area level to ensure that the input is used as required and in accordance with the Criteria.
- Each Service has access to the service of a Senior Educational Psychologist and another Educational Psychologist specialising in that area. This work will be planned through the work of the ALN&I Area Forums and the Cross-County Panel.

The table below summarises the type of input offered in terms of graduated response to needs.

STEP	ROLE
<b>STEP 1</b> (School Action)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Educational Psychologist work by specific catchment area / area according to the above descriptions.</li> <li>• Training at school, regional and county level on subjects relating to interventions, methods of monitoring and assessing progress, methods of mapping whole school provision and individual-centred planning.</li> <li>• Close co-operation with ALN Quality Officers and ALN&amp;I Co-ordinators within schools.</li> </ul>
<b>STEP 2</b> (Schools Action and Plus)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Educational Psychologist work by specific catchment area / area according to the above descriptions.</li> <li>• Consultation with parents and key staff within the school at individual or group level to promote change and development.</li> <li>• Therapeutic intervention on group or individual level</li> <li>• Close co-operation with School/Cluster ALN&amp;I Co-ordinator within schools and with the ALN Quality Officers.</li> <li>• Discuss cases in Area Forums/ ALN&amp;I County Panels</li> <li>• Close co-operation with parents and other agencies involved with cases.</li> </ul>

<b>STEP 3 and 4</b>  Area Forum / Integrated Team Input (SA+/Statement) Cross-County Panel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Input by Designated Senior Education Psychologist for the Integrated Service in all areas including strategic planning, training, and consultation within the area.</li> <li>• Psychological and Strategic input within Area Forums.</li> <li>• Close co-operation with ALN Quality Officers.</li> <li>• Educational Psychologist work by specific catchment area/area including statutory duties within this catchment area/area.</li> <li>• Consultation and close co-operation with members of the same area within the integrated service, schools and other agencies to ensure high quality intervention and psychological awareness.</li> </ul>
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**The Service staffing structure can be seen below. All Educational Psychologists are involved with Autism within their catchment areas (as well as a wide range of other fields).** Also, within the Educational Psychology Service there is a Senior Educational Psychologist who takes a lead and strategic role within the field, collaborating on the Neuro-Developmental assessment pathway responsible for assessing Autism, and close collaboration with the Communication and Interaction Team. Other Senior Psychologists can also contribute to the field within their own specialisms.



### Communication and Interaction Service

#### 1. Aim

The Communication and Interaction Service collaborates with Gwynedd and Anglesey schools to seek to enrich language skills, communication and interaction and respond gradually when difficulties in relation to Delay, Disorders or Autism impact development in these fields.

#### 2. Objectives

In order to achieve this aim, as a service we have set the following objectives:

- Ensure that the ethos of Gwynedd and Anglesey schools ensures the schools' ownership of young people who have communicating and networking needs.
- Ensure full partnership with relevant agencies within the Health Board (e.g. Speech and Language Therapy, Clinical Psychology).
- The workforce of each school in Gwynedd and Anglesey to receive appropriate training which will lead to teachers who are confident to plan for the development of language and communication skills.
- Ensure expert guidance to enable schools to tailor specialist interventions within the school's resources.
- Ensure local standard specialist provision for the young people with the most severe needs.
- Ensure clear contact with the community health sector to identify linguistic needs early.

### 3. Indicators

The Communication and Interaction Service measures the success of the provision through a number of indicators. Our main indicators are noted below;

- Progress in the main indicators at the end of key stages
- An increase in the standardised scores in Numeracy and Literacy Standardised Tests.
- An increase in the standardised scores in National Tests.
- Development in skills according to indicators of standardised, non-standardised and directive criteria language and communication and interaction assessments, communication and interaction by professionals (e.g., Educational and/or Clinical Psychologist, Speech and Language Therapist, Specialist Teacher).
- An increase in the percentage of schools' workforces who have relevant training in identifying and targeting language and communication needs, autism and interaction skills.
- Evidence of generalising skills by observations.

### 4. Provision

The provision offered by the Communication and Interaction Service has been split into two main sub-sections.

#### **School Action**

##### *General*

Every school in Gwynedd and Anglesey receives a devolved budget in order to implement school level strategies to support young people with Communication and Interaction Difficulties, for example:

- Establish systems which enable the pupils to be targeted according to their needs.
- Use of a screening tool to identify areas to ensure the development of a friendly learning environment to develop communication skills.
- Every pupil with communication problems receives early graduated response which meets his or her needs, such as access to focus groups, target groups, to develop communication and interaction and literacy and numeracy skills.
- Ensure an environment which is inclusive for individuals with difficulty understanding and expressing the use of verbal language, or with difficulties involving themselves in social interaction.

The Communication and Networking Service supports the work of schools by presenting each teacher and classroom assistant with an agreed training programme. This training programme is consistent across schools with a clear focus on secondary school progression.

The training programme is reviewed every five years and only interventions with evidence of being effective are approved. Schools can have access to ready resources and specific information through the ALN and Inclusion Service's Resource Library.

## **Schools Action Plus**

### *Specialist*

Every school in Gwynedd and Anglesey can refer pupils to the attention of the ALN and Inclusion Area Forum. This should be undertaken in line with the Criteria by following the agreed procedure. Some young pupils will have already been brought to the service's attention through Early Years identification systems through the Early Years Forum.

As part of the provision, a school can receive specialist support for the individual within a half term. The work is organised by our Senior Communication and Interaction Teacher. There is robust collaboration with the Speech and Language Therapy Department making the service completely integrated, and the work of modelling, monitoring and co-implementing the strategies under the guidance of our Specialist Teachers and Speech and Language Therapists as part of the Partnership service. The effectiveness of the specialist strategies are measured and the progress of the individuals is reported back at the forum. Where there is no evidence of progress, the support is reviewed. The Specialist support follows specific steps.

The specialist provision is planned on a step by step basis in order to ensure gradual intervention, in line with agreed Criteria. The flowchart below provides an outline of the Service's steps:

## **Specialist Centres**

The Communication and Interaction Service offers specialist provision for the small number of pupils who achieve the Criteria for Step 3. In line with the Criteria, some pupils can be referred to local specialist provision located within Gwynedd and Anglesey schools.

There is a focus on up-skilling these pupils to be able to cope better within a mainstream situation should they return to it. Any pupil who receives a placement within our specialist provision does so for a specific period of time with a definite plan to return full-time. The pupil remains on the school register, and in most cases half day placements are offered.

The provision is reviewed after two terms, and then on a termly basis after that. The ALN&I Area Forum determines the length of the placement and comes to an opinion regarding the pupil's suitability to return to mainstream education.

On leaving the Specialist Centres, the ALN&I Area Forum will decide whether the pupil is eligible in terms of the Criteria to receive Step 1 or 2 input during the transition back to full-time mainstream school.

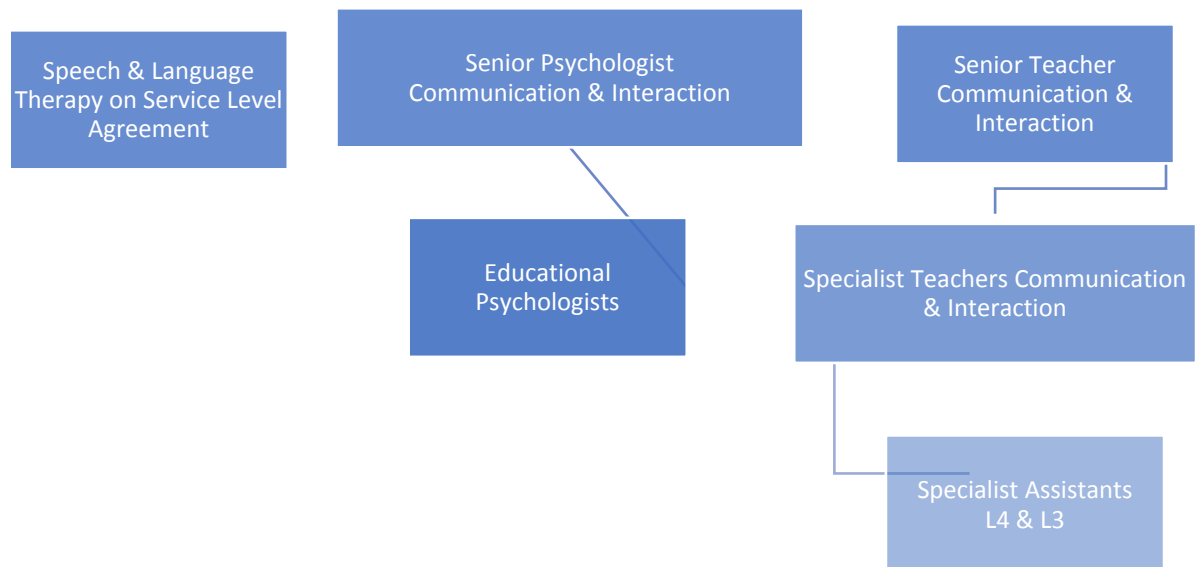
### ***Language Disorder Centres***

The Language Disorder Centres provision focuses on specific language disorders, where elements of a pupil's knowledge, expression, speech and short-term memory continue to develop in a problematic way in terms of suitable linguistic ability. These Centres do not provide a service for children with Autism.

### ***Social Communication Centres***

The Social Communication Centres are a provision which focus on difficulties with social use of language, interaction and communicating skills, behavioural needs which derive from social communication difficulties, social situational knowledge etc. The provision is suitable for children with needs such as this who have not necessarily received a diagnosis of an Autistic Spectrum Disorder.

### **Staffing Structure**



As well as the above Central Services, two other services provide for Autism within the Authority. These provisions are currently within the scope of Phase 2 of the ALN&I Strategic Review.

### **Early Years Assessment and Observation Service**

Currently there are Four Nursery Class Units within the County that provide specialist early input and further assessments to inform of the likely need of young children with ALN when they reach full-time education age (Reception Class). Approximately two thirds of the children who attend have communication and interaction difficulties that can may be going through the Neuro-developmental Pathway assessment for Autism.

There is a Senior Educational Psychologist for Early Years, and the time of Educational Psychology is given for Early Years referrals and ABC.

### **Special Schools**

Both Schools provide a service for children and young people aged between 0-19, a number of these are children with Autism are part of profound and complex Learning Difficulties.

**2. Information about the nature of any plans:**

See above

**3. How does the Housing Service work jointly with autism officers and people with autism?**

Not relevant

**4. How do you plan and provide a service where people with learning disability have different requirements?**

The ALN&I Service works in a person-centred way and responds to the needs of individuals. A learning disability is not essential to gain access to the services. The service is available across the ability spectrum.

Within Gwynedd there are two Special Schools for the county's most profound individuals in terms of Learning Disabilities and the Educational Psychology Service provides a service for these two schools.

**5. How do you plan and provide services in order to give consideration to mental health issues?**

Developing the skills of Schools to respond to mental health issues is an integral part of the Education Psychology Service. For example:

- Senior Psychologist for Welfare, Emotional Health and Inclusion working on a Nurturing Schools project.
- Whole-school training in Mental health awareness
- Offer Mindfulness and Yotism (Yoga for Autism) provision
- Therapeutic work using Cognitive Behavioural Therapy techniques and Short Term Therapy (solution-focused)
- ELSA (Emotional Literacy Support Assistant) training Autumn 18 - Summer 19 provided to up-skill classroom assistants in Schools. An element of the 6 day course looks at welfare and communication and interaction difficulties such as Autism.

**6. Show how you address challenges such as finding a home, finding work and appropriate educational support.**

There are challenges for the Teams in terms of capacity to provide specialist input - we are working on our access and exiting Criteria in order to ensure that we provide for the right period, to the right individuals.

**7. Give an update on the OPUS work in terms of people with autism.**

Not relevant

**8. Note if you employ autism officers or otherwise, their number and a brief description of their work.**

Officers who deal with Autism in the Central Service within the Strategy.

Communication and Interaction Service	Gwynedd	Anglesey	Total
Senior Teacher	0.6	0.2	0.8
Specialist Teacher	5.2	2	7.2
Senior Assistant	3	1	4
Specialist Assistant	7	1	8
Assistant	2	0	2

**9. If you do not employ officers, show how your Department (and schools) work jointly with autism officers.**

Not relevant

**10. Show the impact that autism officers have on service users, their families and carers.**

- Ensure early intervention that enables individuals to be included in their local school as much as possible.
- Provide the correct level of input in terms of curriculum differentiation.
- Increase skills and the experience of school staff in their ability to provide suitable activity planning to develop the whole person within the educational location.
- (See also the aim and objectives of the services in 1.)

**11. Note any particular skills with the work and any concerns or difficulties.**

**Achievements:**

**Educational Psychology Service**

- Catchment area meetings every half term in order to identify training needs etc.
- Develop the Team's role in providing training and therapeutic interventions.
- The role of the Senior Psychologists in specialist areas e.g. Autism.
- Collaboration between the Senior Psychologists and the Psychologists within the team in order to nurture specialism and good practice.
- Secondary Inclusion Group Mental Health Day.
- Collaboration with parents.

**Communication and Interaction Service**

- Provide Training for Schools
- Modelling Good Practice
- Input of Specialist Teachers in order to establish provisions within schools



- Assistance of Specialist Assistants - able to locate specialism in the school for extended periods
- The Communication and Interaction Centre (1)
- The Language Impairment Centres(4)
- Service area meetings
- Collaboration with parents.

#### **Challenges:**

- Access system to the Service is challenging in terms of numbers - this is greater in terms of Primary age Language Disorder and Autism in very young children.
- Planning for the Future in terms of provisions
- High level of assistance in the Mainstream continues to be a challenge in terms of budgeting.
- The ability to respond to demand for expertise in the early years.
- Share knowledge/systems with the Speech and Language Therapists and other agencies.
- Challenge to respond to applications involving the Neurodevelopmental Pathway in terms of Assessment work by the Educational Psychologists - no financial investment.

#### **12. Give information about your plans to deal with difficulties and any developments that are planned for the future.**

##### **Priorities for the future:**

- Develop and improve impact indicators.
- Improve information sharing systems with Speech and Language Therapists and the Neurodevelopmental Pathway.
- Contribute towards improving the access arrangements to the service
- Continue to develop and implement the Training Strategy.
- Continue to develop and train the team members
- Assess the need for further Specialist Centres in specific locations.
- Ensure that there are suitable staffing resources to achieve the strategy.
- Collaborate with colleagues regionally and nationally

#### **13. Show how you collaborate and jointly plan with each other and with external agencies such as the Health Board.**

- Collaborate and close joint planning continuing between the Educational Psychology Service and the Communication and Interaction Service.
- Develop a strong link with the Neurodevelopmental Pathway, and strategically across the region via the Senior Educational Psychologist role.