

AEP Annual Conference 2023 - Programme

Actions speak louder than words: living and practising our espoused values

November 8th, 9th & 10th 2023.

Wednesday 8th	Education
13:00 – 13:30	Welcome <i>Dewi Hughes, President, AEP</i> <i>Cath Lowther, AEP General Secretary</i>
13.30 – 14.00	Keynote address: <i>Professor Mel Ainscow, University of Glasgow</i>
14:00 – 14.10	<i>Break /Smart Networking Session</i>
14.10 – 14.55	Workshops/seminars (1-5)
14.55 – 15.20	<i>Break /Smart Networking</i>
15.20 – 16.05	Workshops/seminars (6-10)
16.05– 16.15	<i>Break /Smart Networking</i>
16.15– 16.30	Words of solidarity: <i>Daniel Kebede, General Secretary, National Education Union</i>
16.30 - 18.00	<i>Smart Networking</i>

Thursday 9th	Community
13:00	Introduction
13:05 -13.35	Keynote address: <i>Ncazelo Ncube, CEO, Phola International, South Africa</i>
13.35 – 13.45	<i>Break /Smart Networking</i>
13.45 – 14.30	Workshops/seminars (11-14)
14.30– 14.55	<i>Break /Smart Networking</i>
14.55 – 15.40	Workshops/seminars (15-19)
15.40 – 15.50	<i>Break /Smart Networking</i>
15.50– 16:20	Keynote address: <i>Jenni Kerr and Marianne Paul, Glasgow Educational Psychology Service</i>

16:20 – 16:45	<i>Break /Smart Networking</i>
16.45	Activity: '3-minute thesis'

Friday 10th	International
13:00	Introduction
13:05 -13.35	Keynote Address: <i>Zack Polanski, London Assembly Member</i>
13.35 – 13.45	<i>Break /Smart Networking</i>
13.45 – 14.30	Workshops/seminars (20-22)
14.30– 14.55	<i>Break /Smart Networking</i>
14.55 – 15.40	Debate Educational Psychologists should see themselves as activists
15.40 – 15.50	<i>Break /Smart Networking</i>
15.50– 16:20	Keynote Address: <i>Baroness Bennett, former Green Party Leader</i> <i>Closing remarks</i>

Workshop Schedule:

Wednesday 8th, 14:10 – 14:55

Number	Title	Presenter/s
1	Communication of pupils in a special school: the role compassion and connectivity for understanding the voices of pupils	Dr Kirsty Evans & Dr Kathryn Lynch , Educational Psychologists at The Westminster School
2	Reimagining “LEGO-based® therapy” and introducing the Brick-by-Brick programme: a co-created learning through play experience to support children’s social and emotional development	Dr Elinor Brett , Director and Educational Psychologist at Play Included C.I.C Dr Margaret Laurie , Research and Evaluation Lead at Play Included C.I.C
3	Findings of an early intervention pilot programme for children with severe learning difficulties, using a multi-disciplinary approach	Donna Wiggett (Senior Educational Psychologist), Erin Gillespie (Assistant EP), Chloe Lindsay & Laura Finn (Psychology)

		Assistants) - Education Authority Northern Ireland
4	Reintegration to mainstream: use and predictive value of the Reintegration for Readiness Scale	John Ivens , Independent Educational Psychologist
5	Moving the literacy and dyslexia debates forward: Promoting reading for all	Dr Joanna Stanbridge , Senior Educational Psychologist at Cambridgeshire County Council & Professor Vivian Hill , Programme Director DEdPsy at UCL Institute of Education

Wednesday 8th, 15:20 – 16:00

Number	Title	Presenter/s
6	The Ideal School: Supporting EBSA in autistic students.	Dr Mollie Higgins , Child & Educational Psychologist at Wandsworth Council
7	Children as co-researchers: a participatory project on children's views on their return to school experiences using Appreciative Inquiry	Janet Rowley , Specialist Senior Educational Psychologist at London Borough of Redbridge
8	The curriculum and autistic students: thoughts from practice	Claire Carroll , Area Lead Educational Psychologist at One Education Ltd.
9	Adolescents' views on CBT: What works and what doesn't?	James Redburn , Educational Psychologist at Waltham Forest
10	Working systemically through SENCO clusters	Nicholas English , Principal Educational Psychologist at Cognus / Sutton LB

Thursday 9th, 13:45 – 14:30

Number	Title	Presenter/s
11	Exploring the development of the Rhythm and Wellbeing (RAW) music intervention for CYP	Marco Temes Serrano , Educational Psychologist at London Borough of Redbridge
12	The influence of published research in Educational Psychology on local and national policy and practice.	Jeremy Swinson , Self-employed Educational Psychologist

13	Writing, or Reviewing for a Professional Academic Journal	Stephanie James and EPIP Editorial Board
14	Activism and Systemic Work in Schools – Promoting Relational Approaches	Sean Octigan , National Officer – Professional Policies Support at Association of Educational Psychologists

Thursday 9th October, 14:55 – 14:40

Number	Title	Presenter/s
15	The role of the educational psychologist in addressing inadequate housing and its impact on children and families on their caseload	Dr Paige Garbett , Educational and Child Psychologist at City of Wolverhampton Council
16	A new Community Psychology initiative	Helen Emsley & Elaine Shone , Specialist Senior Educational Psychologists: Community at Stoke on Trent City Council
17	Political Advocacy	Andy Sawford , Managing Partner at Connect Communications
18	Trauma, Brain Development and Neuro Diversity	Dr Hannah Hulme , Assistant Principle Educational Psychologist at Tameside Educational Psychology Service
19	A mixed methods study exploring whether referral to the Internal Inclusion Unit results in change to pupil behaviour and exploring the student’s perceptions of the facility.	Aaron Reynolds Educational Psychologist (SEMH/Behaviour Lead) at The London Borough of Hillingdon

Friday 10th, 13:45 – 14:30

Number	Title	Presenter/s
20	Applying the lessons from ‘meeting science’ to meetings involving young people.	Jenny Fraser-Smith , Area Principal Educational Psychologist at Highland Council Psychological Service
21	Decolonisation and Educational Psychology:	Sean Octigan , National Officer for AEP and Lynne Mackey , AEP Chair of Employment & Policies Sub-Committee
22	Primary school support for asylum-seeking and refugee children	Jade Wang , Educational Psychologist at Newcastle LA

Wednesday 8th October, 14:10 – 14:55

Seminars 1-5

- 1. Seminar Title:** Communication of pupils in a special school: the role compassion and connectivity for understanding the voices of pupils

Seminar Presenters:

Name: Dr Kirsty Evans

Job Title: Educational Psychologist

Employer: The Westminster School

Name: Dr Kathryn Lynch

Job Title: Educational Psychologist

Employer: The Westminster School

Seminar Abstract: Gaining and acting on the voices of those with moderate to severe learning needs and complex communication difficulties is not an easy task. As EPs working in a special school, this is something that is one of our guiding principles for practice.

Riley's Three Cs framework which draws on research on school belonging suggests that communication, compassion and connectivity are crucial. In our setting, communication was interpreted as the voice of pupils and the role of staff in reading and understanding this communication. Connection and compassion are the vehicles for amplifying the voices and experiences of young people. This is in opposition to compliance-based education approaches where young people do not have a voice or agency and where educational structures and practices can undermine consent. Having a voice and agency are important for safety and independence, as raised in parent work. Application of the Three Cs framework is the foundation for pupils' understanding of consent and their wider preparation for adulthood.

Recent media reports have highlighted the abuse of young people with similar needs to our cohort. If such marginalised groups are not treated with compassion, and given a voice, this increases the risk of de-humanization and abuse.

Voices are more than verbal language; although initially it seemed counter-intuitive, observation was deemed to be the appropriate method for thinking about how adults read and interpret non-verbal communication, tune into a young person's arousal level, view behaviour as communication and are adaptive and responsive to pupils' needs.

Appreciative observations were carried out following the co-construction of an observation framework with staff focused on communication, connectivity and compassion. In this presentation, we will discuss the positive practice observed and the impact of this on pupils.

2. Seminar Title: Reimagining “LEGO-based® therapy” and introducing the Brick-by-Brick programme: a co-created learning through play experience to support children’s social and emotional development

Seminar Presenters:

Name: Dr Elinor Brett

Job Title: Director and Educational Psychologist

Employer: Play Included C.I.C

Name: Dr Margaret Laurie

Job Title: Research and Evaluation Lead

Employer: Play Included C.I.C

Seminar Abstract:

An increasing evidence base shows that children learn best through play. Experiences which are actively engaging, iterative, joyful, meaningful, and social can support children’s development across a range of skills, and research has shown that educational interventions which apply these principles are effective (Zosh, Hassinger-Das & Laurie, 2022).

The Brick-by-Brick® programme is a redevelopment of what was formally known as LEGO-based therapy: a child-led programme where children build LEGO models collaboratively in teams, and with playful facilitation from a trained adult. In partnership with The LEGO Foundation, we worked with autistic and neurodivergent consultants to develop the Brick-by-Brick® programme. Based on our consultation, we now incorporate teaching about neurodiversity into our training for health and educational professionals, and encourage our Brick Clubs, where the Brick-by-Brick methodology is applied, to be as child-led and inclusive as possible. In Brick Clubs, children have the opportunity to have fun, make friends, and practice a range of different skills in a neurodiversity affirming environment.

We have worked with AT-Autism, who conducted a participatory action research study to develop novel measures to track children’s progress and outcomes from the programme, co-created with neurodivergent expertise and tested in over 7 countries. Their findings show that the Brick-by-Brick programme is feasible to set up in school settings, positively viewed by children, Brick Club Facilitators, professionals and families. This pilot work also showed that the Brick-by-Brick programme can positively improve attitudes about neurodiversity in children, their families and professionals, and can support children in inclusion, belonging, and wellbeing.

In this presentation Play Included CIC will introduce the Brick-by-Brick programme and share learnings from the co-creation process.

3. Seminar Title: Findings of an early intervention pilot programme for children with severe learning difficulties, using a multi-disciplinary approach

Seminar Presenter:

Name: Donna Wiggett

Job Title: Senior Educational Psychologist

Employer: EANI

Seminar

abstract:

Since the outbreak of COVID-19, there has been substantial pressure placed on the Education Authority's (EA) Stage 2 services, due to higher numbers of children with a Severe Learning Difficulties (SLD) profile being placed in mainstream settings. A Sensory Circuits programme was implemented by a range of services, including EA's Educational Psychology Service (EPS), EA's SEN Early Years Inclusion Service (SENEYIS), and HSC's Regional Integrated Support for Education (RISE); aimed to help children with a SLD profile, specifically Newcomer children, in mainstream nursery settings in the Dungannon area, Northern Ireland.

Sensory circuits are designed for children to obtain and process sensory input to regulate their body, enabling them to be ready to engage with their environment (Ayres 1979, Kilroy, Aziz-Zadeh, & Cermak, 2019).

N=11 children (91% had Newcomer status; 9% were Irish Traveller) took part in this pilot which involved Sensory circuits and the Engagement for Learning profile, (Barry Carpenter et al. 2015). Baseline assessments were taken using the Engagement for Learning scale. Results showed a spikey profile with a general upward trend increase in engagement on the scales. Results also showed an increase in personal, social and emotional, communication, physical, and thinking skills determined by the Developmental Journal Scale. There was a workshop for parents to share the skills and techniques.

Due to the success of this programme, it is hoped to be rolled out to a wider number of pre-school and mainstream settings across the region.

This presentation will share the findings of the pilot programme incorporating case studies.

4. Seminar Title: Reintegration to mainstream: use and predictive value of the Reintegration for Readiness Scale

Seminar Presenter:

Name: John Ivens

Job Title: Educational Psychologist

Employer: Independent

Seminar Abstract:

The focus is the use of teacher assessments in a psychiatric setting to predict a successful return to school and to identify areas for support. Returning to their 'home' school involves collaborative planning between professionals but what can predict a successful return? Could using a teacher-based assessment of pupil-functioning designed for pupils in excluded settings be usefully adapted to the hospital schools' setting? Would these assessments be better predictors of return than those of attainment, test behaviour or school-related happiness?

The study is an analysis of 600+ pupils' admission and discharge data from a school serving 6 services in two psychiatric hospitals. The RRS (McSherry 2003) is a teacher-completed, 71 item 4-point scale measure covering 8 subscales including: Self-Management of Behaviour, Self and Others, Self Confidence, Self-Organisation, Attitude, Self-Awareness, Learning Skills and Literacy Skills. The RRS takes 5 minutes to complete after the teacher has had two weeks experience of working with the pupil. It requires minimal training and is based on teacher-identified learning behaviours.

The RRS measure had been selected as an aid towards facilitating reintegration: this study analyses how successful a predictor it is.

The data were used to create a simple 3-tier triage model: Low (L), Moderate (M) and Highest (H) risk for reintegration failure. This corresponds to failure-to-reintegrate rates of L 3%, M 15% and H 31% respectively.

The pupil's RRS profile aids teachers in devising interventions to help vulnerable pupils return successfully. It helps to select who needs more help and in which area of school functioning. The RRS and information on how to use the measure and interpret results will be covered and a 'take-home' Excel version provided.

5. Seminar Title: Moving the literacy and dyslexia debates forward: Promoting reading for all

Seminar Presenters:

Name: Dr Joanna Stanbridge

Job Title: Senior Educational Psychologist

Employer: Cambridgeshire County Council

Name: Professor Vivian Hill

Job Title: Programme Director DEdPsy

Employer: UCL Institute of Education

Seminar Abstract:

Literacy difficulties remain a considerable area of concern for very many children and young people, their parents and schools. However, they also remain among the most controversial areas of educational psychology work. There have been tremendous developments in the understanding of literacy teaching and of the nature of literacy difficulties over the last quarter of a century since the publication of the BPS's guidance on Literacy, Dyslexia and Psychological Assessment. It is therefore time for guidance on literacy and literacy difficulties for Educational Psychologists to be updated so that it can reflect up-to-date evidence from research.

This seminar will provide an overview of developments in psychological theory around literacy difficulties over the last quarter of a century. Information will be shared about the scale of literacy difficulties in the UK, as well as their impacts within and beyond education and the current inequalities that exist relating to identification, support and outcomes.

An overview will be provided of up-to-date approaches for teaching reading in general and of consideration of how to support those children who are not making progress with their reading in a way which is equitable, effective, scalable and grounded in solid theory and evidence. Rationale will be provided for why this endeavour requires a shift in practice and support from a model of individual dyslexia diagnosis and instead towards systemic frameworks for identifying, addressing and supporting children and young people who experience literacy difficulties in a way which is accessible to everybody, no matter what their background is. Some of the related key innovations proposed within the updated BPS DECP Guidance on literacy difficulties will be presented with the aim that there will be much-needed clarity and confidence within the educational psychology profession about how we can move on from longstanding debates and provide literacy for all.

Wednesday 8th October, 15:20 – 16:05
Seminar 6-10

6. Seminar Title: The Ideal School: Supporting EBSA in autistic students

Seminar Presenter:

Name: Dr Mollie Higgins

Job Title: Child & Educational Psychologist

Employer: Wandsworth Council

Seminar Abstract:

Autistic students are at increased risk of experiencing Emotionally Based School Avoidance and this seminar will explore the underlying reasons behind this, from an individual, home and school perspective.

Historically, the voices of autistic individuals have been overlooked within research, due to assumptions that their social communication difficulties will impact their ability to share their views. The current research aims to empower autistic individuals and ensure their voices remain at the centre of the research. The seminar will describe how Personal Construct Psychology can be used to obtain the views of young people with social communication difficulties. A Drawing the Ideal School approach was used to gather data in the current research and attendees will explore the benefits of using this approach with autistic students who are experiencing EBSA.

The views and voices of ten autistic young people will then be shared, exploring their experiences of school and the ideal type of school they would like to attend.

The research provides clear links to practice and offers practical adjustments and adaptations that schools can make to support the attendance of autistic students. In addition, the research will explore wider implications for EP practice when supporting the attendance of autistic students, using a systemic, inclusive and neurodiversity-affirming approach.

7. Seminar Title: Children as co-researchers: a participatory project on children's views on their return to school experiences using Appreciative Inquiry

Seminar Presenter:

Name: Janet Rowley

Job Title: Specialist Senior Educational Psychologist

Employer: London Borough of Redbridge

Seminar Abstract:

The seminar will present on a participatory action research (PAR) project which was carried out in a London borough within three schools. The project was rooted in values deriving from critical community psychology: social justice, a focus on reducing the power differential, and the aim to empower others to bring about change.

The research project was aligned with the transformative paradigm, which encompasses emancipatory, participatory and inclusive approaches to research and in which the results of the inquiry are linked to action which furthers a social justice agenda. The project was also informed by

the indigenous paradigm through its contextual relevance to each school, the focus on dialogue and respect for local knowledge systems (i.e., the children's ways of knowing).

This research project explored children's views on their experiences of their return to education following the pandemic. The project used Appreciative Inquiry (AI), employing participatory approaches in which the children participated as co-researchers throughout the research process. The broad research question was: 'What are children's views on their return to education?' which was refined with the co-researchers. The project, facilitated by seven assistant educational psychologists, took place with 6-8 children within each of three mainstream primary schools in a London local authority. The children participated as co-researchers, deciding on the research question and the methods of data collection. The AI approach enabled the co-researchers to identify common positive themes as well as to make suggestions for change-oriented action within their schools, many of which were put into place. The findings identified and disseminated by the co-researchers are specific to each school. Implications for Educational Psychology practice lie in the study's empowering and transformative approach to facilitating children's participation in ways which lead to positive change.

8. Seminar Title: The curriculum and autistic students: thoughts from practice

Seminar Presenter:

Name: Claire Carroll

Job Title: Area Lead Educational Psychologist

Employer: One Education Ltd

Seminar Abstract: I have been an autism specialist EP since 2004 and have worked with hundreds of mainstream-educated autistic students; I also have an autistic son (now a young adult). Over the years I have seen themes emerging in my work with autistic young people related to anxiety, inhibition, and struggles with ambiguity, particularly since the "Gove Curriculum" was introduced. In this seminar I explore what "flexible thinking" issues can mean in autistic students who are academically able but who struggle with anxiety and burnout, in relation to the *curricular expectations* of mainstream education rather than teacher approaches, or the social or sensory environment. I believe this to be a hugely under-explored area of EP practice. I have explored these ideas with autistic adults who have felt that my hypothesis resonates with them when looking back over their own school experiences.

I have delivered this training (or similar slightly longer version) to a number of specialist teachers and other autism specialists in education, who have found it fundamentally shifted their understanding of why some able autistic students struggle in certain subjects. It does not claim to speak for every autistic student, but to explain why a certain cohort with certain commonalities of learning strengths and issues may struggle.

9. Seminar Title: Adolescents' views on CBT: What works and what doesn't?

Seminar Presenter:

Name: James Redburn

Job Title: Educational Psychologist

Employer: Waltham Forest

Seminar Abstract: This seminar builds on findings from a systematic qualitative review exploring how

young people (YP) conceptualise positive outcomes from cognitive-behavioural therapy (CBT) and what YP perceive to be the facilitators and barriers to positive outcomes. One aim was to amplify the voice of YP with mental health difficulties as a marginalised group whose voices are seldom heard in the CBT literature, which is dominated by randomised controlled trials.

Methods - A systematic literature search was conducted. Studies were included if qualitative data were collected from participants who were aged 0-25, had internalising mental health difficulties, and had received in-person CBT from trained therapists.

Results - Nineteen studies were included. The Gough Weight of Evidence framework was used to assess methodological and topical quality and relevance. A thematic synthesis identified 34 conceptualisations of positive outcomes, 57 facilitators, and 49 barriers. Descriptive and analytic themes were identified. In line with the review's pragmatic perspective, the latter were worded as practice recommendations: acknowledge YP's perspectives on outcomes, teach tangible CBT techniques, balance autonomy and support, frame CBT as 'upskilling',

Conclusions - This review established the range of YP's views about positive outcomes from CBT, as well as facilitators and barriers to achieving these. Findings should prompt CBT practitioners to reflect and consider how their practice might be shaped through reports from YP as experts by experience.

10. Seminar Title: Working systemically through SENCO clusters

Seminar Presenter:

Name: Nicholas English

Job Title: Principal Educational Psychologist

Employer: Cognus / Sutton LB

Seminar Abstract:

This seminar will overview a model of working which has been in place in Sutton for just over two years now. SENCO clusters were set up to provide regular meetings for problem solving between a consistent groups of SENCOs with an Educational Psychologist dedicated to each cluster to support the facilitation of these discussions. The Educational Psychology service is funded for its input into these meetings. Each cluster additionally has been allocated a pot of funding which comes from the high needs block which is available for SENCOs in the cluster to bid for. The cluster can bid for training, interventions and support for individual pupils (although not pupils with an EHCP) The role of clusters and the associated Educational Psychologist has shifted over time, and increasingly groups of SENCOs are taking responsibility for running and contributing into task and finish groups which aim to address other systemic issues related to SEN in the budget. Interestingly Educational Psychology Service is still being asked to contribute to these task and finish groups. This seminar will provide more information about this initiative sharing feedback from SENCOs and EPs up to this point. Furthermore, it considers the potential next steps for advancing this model of working.

Thursday 9th October, 13:45 – 14:30

Seminar 11-14

11. Seminar Title: Exploring the development of the Rhythm and Wellbeing (RAW) music intervention for CYP

Seminar Presenter:

Name: Marco Temes Serrano

Job Title: Educational Psychologist

Employer: London Borough of Redbridge

Seminar Abstract:

"RAW Music Project" is an innovative and transformative programme spearheaded by the Redbridge Educational and Wellbeing Team (REWT), with a core focus on utilising the power of music to cultivate a safe and nurturing environment where children can creatively explore and express their emotions.

At REWT, we conceive of this project as a dynamic platform that promotes the democratic and inclusive use of music to augment the skillset of our dedicated Emotional Literacy Support Assistants (ELSAs) and revolutionise the approach to emotional literacy. This comprehensive six-week intervention with the aim of empowering our assistants to take initiative and excel in their roles.

The foundation of this structured intervention draws upon a wealth of research, incorporating key principles from Communicative Musicality (Malloch and Trevarthen, 2009), the PACE model (Daniel Hughes, 2004), and Interoception awareness (Kelly Mahler, 2015). By incorporating these invaluable insights, we have created a programme that is both evidence-based and responsive to the diverse emotional needs of children.

Thanks to generous funding from our local Clinical Commissioning Group, we were able to initiate a pilot cohort consisting of eight primary schools. This pilot programme allowed schools to experience and evaluate the intervention and training model, ultimately enabling them to develop their own unique musical initiatives. Encouraged by the resounding success and positive impact observed during the pilot phase, we have recently secured additional funding to expand the scope of the project to include special educational needs provisions and secondary schools.

The groundbreaking achievements of RAW have not gone unnoticed. The project has garnered significant recognition, with notable presentations at the ELSA national conference in 2022 held in Birmingham, as well as at the esteemed National Association of Principal Educational Psychologist (NAPEP) conference—a highly regarded professional development event attended by educational authorities from across London.

12. Seminar Title: The influence of published research in Educational Psychology on local and national policy and practice.

Seminar Presenter:

Name: Jeremy Swinson

Job Title: Educational Psychologist

Employer: Self-employed

Seminar Abstract:

It will examine the role that Cyril Burt played in the formation of the 1944 Education Act that has had a lasting impact on how schools in the UK are structured. It will examine the research that was influential in the move to comprehensive schools and the changing nature of primary schools as a result of the Plowden report (1967). EPs contribution to the Bullock report (1975) on literacy skills and the Elton Report (1989) on behaviour in schools will be examined in some detail. The role that EPs played in developing local initiatives for the inclusion of children with learning needs into mainstream schools that played an influential factor in the deliberations Warnock Report on special education leading to the subsequent 1981 Education Act will be examined. More recent developments such as Every Child Matters (2003) and SEAL.

There will be time to discuss the importance that published research and the written word can have at both a national but also international.

13. Seminar Title: Writing, or Reviewing, for a Professional Academic Journal

Seminar Presenter:

Name: Dr Stephanie James

Job Title: Editor

Employer: Educational Psychology in Practice

Seminar Abstract:

Participants will discuss the principles of effective writing for an international, blind peer-reviewed, evidence-based journal (such as *Educational Psychology in Practice*). Consideration will also be given to the role of peer reviewer, including assessing whether journal reporting- standards have been attained.

All practising EPs undertake significant research projects as part of their initial training. Many, once qualified, continue the research journey, while others put into practice, through their work, initiatives based on current research.

It is therefore essential for the profession to have access to informed, critically competent, relevant, and contemporary research, review and practice papers to assist in continuing to develop its role and expertise. This workshop will be relevant to all EPs who want to contribute to this process through publication, either as a writer or as critical reviewer.

14. Seminar Title: Activism and Systemic Work in Schools – Promoting Relational Approaches

Seminar Presenter:

Name: Sean Octigan

Job Title: National Officer – Professional Policies Support

Employer: Association of Educational Psychologists

Seminar Abstract:

Should the EP consider themselves an activist or a neutral party when engaging in systemic work? In

this session I will argue that we all have a role to play as activists and change-makers in the systemic work that we do. I will use a Marxist theoretical framework to critically appraise the systemic tools EPs often use, and to help consider ways we can maximise their effectiveness. I will suggest that relational approaches should be a key focus for our activism within schools.

Thursday 9th October, 14:45 – 14:30

Seminars 15-18

15. Seminar Title: The role of the educational psychologist in addressing inadequate housing and its impact on children and families on their caseload

Seminar Presenter:

Name: Dr Paige Garbett

Job Title: Educational and Child Psychologist

Employer: City of Wolverhampton Council

Seminar Abstract:

This seminar explores the educational psychologist's role in supporting children, young people, and their families with housing. It aims to discuss our relevance and remit to support and work within the area of housing, drawing on community psychology and social justice initiatives to explore how EPs may work and influence practice in the housing sector. The first part of the seminar will talk through the national context of housing, pre-existing literature before a walkthrough of the housing structures within the local area I work as an EP. It will go onto discuss relevant legislation relating to addressing children living in inadequate housing situations, responsibilities of multi-agency teams and explores the literature surrounding inadequate housing and child development. The seminar aims to discuss and reflect on:

- EPs current practice - identifying perceived barriers to this line of work as well as perceived benefits
- Identifying the relevant psychological theory and how this may impact on our formulations of children's experienced/presenting needs
- Identifying and discussing potential avenues of support around housing needs for the children and families we may work with.

The seminar will also explore suggestions for further research, policy development and the feasibility of incorporating this work into practice within educational psychology services with consideration to the education sector as a whole.

16. Seminar Title: A new Community Psychology initiative

Seminar Presenters:

Name: Helen Emsley

Job Title: Specialist Senior Educational Psychologist: Community

Employer: Stoke on Trent City Council

Name: Elaine Shone

Job Title: Specialist Senior Educational Psychologist: Community

Employer: Stoke on Trent City Council

Seminar Abstract:

Applied Community Psychology - 'there's something about Stoke on Trent'. This is our learning story so far as we develop Community Psychology helpfulness across the City of Stoke on Trent in the West Midlands of England.

As a newly developing team of Assistant, Trainee and qualified Educational and Child Psychologists, we are seeking to apply our knowledge and skills in the most effective way for our local people. Our key values are Inclusion, Innovation, Accessibility and Togetherness.

As well as providing traditional EP services, we are reaching beyond the scope of SEND support and asking how can we best contribute to the educational, social and health outcomes of children and young people, and their support systems?

We look forward to talking to AEP colleagues about how we are applying psychology within and for our local communities, discussing:

- * Who can we best collaborate with and where should this happen to secure the best outcomes for children and young people?
- * How can we effectively measure impact for the 41000 enrolled school age learners living and learning within challenging personal, local and historical circumstances?
- * What can we rise to the challenges and negotiate dynamic barriers to applying Community Psychology in a vibrant city?

17. Seminar Title: Political Advocacy

Seminar Presenter:

Name: Andy Sawford

Job Title: Managing Partner

Employer: Connect

Seminar Abstract:

This session will explore how individuals can participate in politics through political advocacy. From contacting MPs to campaigning locally, political advocacy is an important way of engaging with politics across a variety of issues.

18. Seminar Title: Trauma, Brain Development and Neuro Diversity

Seminar Presenter:

Name: Dr Hannah Hulme

Job Title: Assistant Principle Educational Psychologist

Employer: Tameside Educational Psychology Service

Seminar Abstract:

A brief reflection on the unique nature of Brain development. Attachment theory, trauma and neurodiversity are interwoven to support a holistic understanding of how the interplay between brain and experience form a unique person. The seminar will go on to consider how the current education system designed to provide workers for a newly industrialised society is no longer fit for purpose and the loss of the Arts and practical learning together with a behavioural approach, (which is no longer used on dogs) is further characterising our children's school experience as chronically traumatising. Children either survive or fail in our schools, very few thrive.

We will consider the wider social and political purpose of school and how this is at times diametrically opposed to a Growth Mindset and has led to increased disaffection and mental illness in our young people. Consideration will be given to the effects of the Pandemic, to Critical Incident Support and the increase in Emotionally Based School Avoidance. The case will be made for radical education reform, as an answer to improving the health and wellbeing of our Young People.

It is hoped that the presenter will be able to use an extraordinary case study to illustrate the importance of the Arts; as a sensory healing process, which can mitigate against the effects of developmental trauma.

19. Seminar Title: A mixed methods study exploring whether referral to the Internal Inclusion Unit results in change to pupil behaviour and exploring the student's perceptions of the facility.

Seminar Presenter:

Name: Aaron Reynolds

Job Title: Educational Psychologist (SEMH/Behaviour Lead)

Employer: The London Borough of Hillingdon

Seminar Abstract:

'Internal Inclusion Units (IIUs)' are facilities within or associated with schools with the predominantly espoused purpose of reducing exclusions and managing pupil behaviour. IIUs appear to be a highly prevalent facility across English schools, research indicating they existed in over half of secondary schools in 2017 (IFF Research Ltd et al., 2018), despite minimal research or guidance regarding their use existing at that time. Since then, the Government's Behaviour Tsar advised the government to expand the number of IIUs (Bennett, 2017), which the DfE supported with an allocation of £10 million (DfE, 2019). Consequently, it is likely the prevalence of IIUs has only increased. The research explored here used a mixed methods approach to evaluate one London-based IIU: identifying whether referral to the IIU resulted in any statistical change in pupil behaviour and what IIU attendees perceived about IIU use.

The quantitative phase analysed 20 pupils' behaviour over a twelve-week period, whilst the qualitative phase explored 6 pupil's perceptions of the IIU through interviews. The quantitative findings indicated that IIU referral likely resulted in a decrease in pupils' 'misbehaviour'. However, the qualitative findings indicated there were also a series of negative and ethically questionable implications of IIU use on pupils.

The findings suggest pupils engaged in considerable meaning making around IIU use, resulting in perceptions/fears of 'rejection and neglect' by school staff and 'unfairness and injustice' of the system; in turn appearing to result in a considerable emotional toll which pupils employed a series of coping mechanisms to manage. Nonetheless, most pupils believed the IIU improved their behaviour, was a necessary facility in schools and highlighted several ways the IIU resulted in their behavioural improvement. In this seminar, these results and the implications for practice are explored, with highlights around the work about to be conducted to improve IIU practice.

Friday 10th October, 13:45 – 14:30
Seminars 20-23

20. Seminar Title: Applying the lessons from ‘meeting science’ to meetings involving young people.

Seminar Presenter:

Name: Jenny Fraser-Smith

Job Title: Area Principal Educational Psychologist

Employer: Highland Council Psychological Service

Seminar Abstract:

This workshop shares an outline of the Double Diamond Design Model (Design Council, 2007) which includes four phases; discover, define, develop, and deliver. Adopted as the Scottish approach to service design (Scottish Government, 2019), the model emphasises an understanding of the problem before designing the solution. This model was adopted for doctoral research to explore the participation of young people with Additional Support Needs (ASN) in decision-making at Child’s Plan meetings in Scotland. The Child’s Plans is a non-statutory plan unlike the Education Health and Care (EHC) plan.

The workshop will explore in depth the discovery phase where a literature review was undertaken. Drawing from organisational psychology literature and the contemporary field of ‘meeting science’ which evidences the factors contributing to quality and effective business meetings, this literature review aimed to apply the knowledge of ‘meeting design characteristics’ on meetings where young people attend. The findings from each study were analysed, identifying these characteristics and additional features which may be uniquely present where young people attend.

The review found 18 papers published in the period 2014-2023. The psychological meeting characteristics included participation, satisfaction, and feelings. The structural meeting characteristics included Physical, Attendee, Procedural, and Temporal characteristics. Implications for practice and recommendations for future research concerning the participation of young people at meetings will be suggested.

21. Seminar Title: Decolonisation and Educational Psychology

Seminar Presenters:

Name: Sean Octigan

Job Title: National Officer – Professional Policies Support

Employer: AEP

Name: Lynne Mackey

Job Title: Chair of EPSC

Employer: AEP

Seminar Abstract:

Colonialism occurs when one country exerts control over another to extract resources and boost its own power. This practice affects both the coloniser and the colonised at a material level, creating wealth and its associated benefits for the coloniser whilst impoverishing the colonised. It also creates racialised hierarchies in relation to knowledge production, culture, ways of being and self-hood.

Western psychology, as a practice that emerged within the colonial context, was used to help justify and normalise these racial hierarchies.

Decolonialisation is the process of unwinding colonialism. This can occur materially, when a colonised country is able to self-govern, but also occurs when the racialised nature of knowledge production, culture, ways of being and self-hood are made apparent and dismantled. The centralisation of previously marginalised knowledge production, culture, ways of being and self-hoods is a vital part of the process of decolonialisation.

In this session we will address what colonialism is and what it means to decolonise. We will argue that the effects of colonialism live on in the present day and encourage attendees to consider ways in which educational psychology can be decolonised.

22. Seminar Title: Primary school support for asylum-seeking and refugee children

Seminar Presenter:

Name: Jade Wang

Job Title: Educational Psychologist

Employer: Newcastle LA

Seminar Abstract:

A qualitative empirical research project was conducted in North East England in 2022 (completed as part of my doctorate), seeking to explore how primary schools can support asylum-seeking and refugee (ASR) children and their families when they enter the English education system, as explored through child and family perspectives. Four families took part in the research, resulting in eight semi-structured interview transcripts (four with children, four with adults). This research takes a critical realist approach and utilises an anti-racist analysis founded on Critical Race Theory. Using reflexive thematic analysis, two themes (comprised of five subthemes) were generated: (1) impactful relationships and (2) refining school support. The results of this research offer novel findings about what is important to ASR children and families. It can inform how educationalists should work with ASR families when they first begin school, with specific emphasis on the educational psychologist's role in working with school staff and families.

Within the local authority which I work, we have EP time for working with international new arrivals. I can share aspects of this work as part of the implications for practice.

I am a Chinese immigrant to the UK, and have personal experiences of starting primary school in the UK. My personal history will have undoubtedly had an effect on me as a researcher and I would share this to support transparency.