



The Management of Educational Psychology Services and the Role of Principal Educational Psychologists:

The AEP position

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The AEP is the independently certificated trade union and professional association for educational psychologists. It represents the professional and employment interests of 93% of the qualified educational psychologists working in the United Kingdom, most of whom work for local government. It is the only professional association or trade union in the UK organised exclusively by and for educational psychologists.

The AEP is unequivocally the voice of the educational psychology profession. In 2007 the AEP had just over 3000 members.

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Foreword

Educational Psychologists have traditionally worked in discrete educational psychology services within Local Educational Authorities, or similar.¹ In England and Wales changes in the organisation of the provision of services for children through Children's Services Authorities have led in some local authorities to radical restructurings of the management and leadership of those services. In all authorities this has meant a coming together under a single leadership of both education services and children's social services. In many authorities this has led to the creation of multi-professional teams working on an area basis rather than single professional groupings working across an authority area. All of these changes have had a significant effect on the management of educational psychologists and the role of educational psychologists. This position paper is a response to those changed circumstances.

The AEP welcomed the publication of Every Child Matters and the introduction of Children's Services Authorities. It sees both of these as significant factors in developing and improving the services provided for children. The AEP does, however, see some threats to the provision and management of educational psychology within the proposals and seeks both to address those concerns and to review its own policy in the light of a changing workplace context. The AEP has also welcomed the establishment of the Children's Services Workforce Development Council (CWDC) and has built fruitful and co-operative relationships with that body. The AEP further welcomes the Children's Workforce Strategy and looks forward to working with the government, our employers and the CWDC on the introduction of any elements that relate to educational psychology.

While the first duty of the AEP is to safeguard the professional integrity of educational psychologists and their working conditions, we believe that by doing this the AEP is helping to create the most appropriate context for the provision for the best services to children.

This position paper relates to the AEP position on the management of educational psychology services and the role of principal educational psychologists in England and Wales specifically. However, the operational principles contained in this paper are commended to AEP members in Scotland and Northern Ireland and should provide guidance to members in those nations when considering matters relating to the management of their educational psychology services.

This paper has been produced following consultation with members of the AEP. Members were invited to make comments and where these have been brought to the attention of the AEP they have been taken into account in the paper. The AEP also sought the views of the National Association of Educational Psychologists (NAPEP) on the draft of this document prior to publication. Where appropriate, comments from NAPEP have been included in this document. This paper has the endorsement of NAPEP.

¹ While this has been the norm for the vast majority of educational psychologists, the AEP acknowledges that some educational psychologists work for voluntary or other agencies and some also are self-employed in private practice.

While some of the policy aspirations contained in this position paper have not yet been achieved, the AEP believes that the supportive actions of its members, particularly of those in management and supervisory positions, can help achieve them. Members of the AEP who are involved in negotiations or in positions of influence are advised to ensure that wherever possible they should be adopting the policies espoused in this paper within their workplace.

During the preparation of this document there was considerable debate about the correct terminology that could be used to describe the professional practice of educational psychologists in their work with individual and groups of children, with their families and with schools and other settings. The only distinct term that could be used was 'clinical practice'. The AEP is aware of the sensitivities around this term among its members. The term 'clinical practice' is used here only to describe the practice of an educational psychologist. Members or others should not infer from its use that the AEP believes that educational psychologists actually work in clinical settings nor does it believe that educational psychologists are clinicians. The terms 'clinical', 'clinical practice' and 'clinical oversight' as used in this document have specific meanings within that specific context.

In this document the AEP policy positions, as reviewed and consolidated in December 2007, are indicated in text boxes. The text provides argumentation and context for those policy decisions, but has no authority above that of general guidance to the policies as contained within the policy boxes. For ease of access all policy statements are included in the accompanying appendix.

This policy paper was approved by the National Executive Committee at its meeting on December 8th, 2007. It replaces all previous policy statements issued by the AEP relating to the management of educational psychology services and principal educational psychologists. The AEP advises its members to act in accordance with these policy statements and any subsequent revisions.

1 Educational Psychologists

Educational psychology is a small and discrete profession providing specialist, but essential, services to all children especially to our most vulnerable children. The very nature, intensity and sensitivity of the work that educational psychologists undertake, at individual, systems and strategic levels, requires them to have a high level of training and qualification. Current training routes require entrants to the profession to have a first degree in psychology with a subsequent Doctorate in Educational Psychology itself. In addition, new entrants are expected to have had substantial and relevant experience working with children before they undertake their applied psychology training. Educational psychologists are expected to have undertaken at least 6 years' training and preparation before becoming fully qualified to practise.

The government has understood the intense nature of the work of educational psychology and the need to ensure the public is protected from unqualified 'practitioners' by placing educational and other applied psychologists high on its priority list for statutory regulation. Statutory regulation not only ensures that all those working as educational psychologists will be properly and professionally qualified, but that they continue to demonstrate their fitness to practise through, among other things, continuing professional development.

For many years local authorities, the major employer of educational psychologists, have recognised the distinctive nature of the profession by including them and two other small groups of local authority officers in the Report of the Soulbury Committee, which considers their pay and conditions separately from other groups of local authority employees. Paragraph 4 of the Soulbury Report relates to educational psychologists, referring, among other matters, specifically to the need for proper career development opportunities for educational psychologists and the need for management of educational psychology services by principal educational psychologists.

The discrete nature of the profession, the intensity of its work and the high level of training required to undertake the work mean that supervision and professional oversight require also a similar level of knowledge, experience and understanding. It is not possible to provide such oversight and supervision without professional training as an educational psychologist. The AEP maintains therefore that supervision of educational psychologists can only be and must only be provided by other educational psychologists. The AEP accepts that in their management and leadership role principal educational psychologists might expect to be supervised by other Children Services' professionals who are not necessarily qualified as educational psychologists. The AEP does expect, however, that Principal Educational Psychologists should always seek for supervision of their professional/'clinical' practice by a qualified educational psychologist.

All educational psychologists have the right to and should expect appropriate supervision of their work.

With the exception of principal educational psychologists, a qualified educational psychologist should provide all such supervision.

The 'clinical practice' of principal educational psychologists should always be supervised by other qualified educational psychologists.

2 Responding to Children's Services Authorities

The creation of Children's Services Authorities has radically changed the way in which services to children are organised and delivered. There is no single model for the organisation and delivery of these services across the country although some common themes are developing. By law, English local authorities have had to establish Children's Services Authorities and in so doing they have, almost universally, combined Children's Social Services with the Local Education Authority.

Through the Every Child Matters agenda the government is strongly promoting the creation of multi-professional teams and multi-disciplinary working. Many local authorities are responding to this exhortation by the establishment of multi-disciplinary area teams. In some authorities these are 'virtual' teams and the organisation of the services that provide the different professional inputs has been maintained at an authority level. In other Children's Services Authorities there is pressure to disband authority-level professional teams. The AEP has always been supportive of measures to introduce multi-disciplinary and multi-professional working. It believes such cooperative work serves the best interests of children and families. However, the AEP believes that disbanding educational psychology services at a local authority level is not in the best interests of the children and families that the local authority serves.

The introduction of area teams has led to the creation of so-called matrix management systems in some local authorities. The significant implication for educational psychologists in such situations has meant that they may be faced with direct line management from someone from a different professional background and the positioning of the principal educational psychologist. Given the discrete and complex professional nature of an educational psychologist's work, it is not possible for others without the same professional training to provide appropriate professional supervision to an educational psychologist, (see Chapter 1). Professional supervision of colleague educational psychologists brings with it significant additional responsibilities which the AEP believes can only be properly rewarded by the supervisor being remunerated on the B scale for Senior and Principal Educational Psychologists.

The provision of supervision to educational psychologists entails professional and managerial responsibilities at such a level that this level of responsibility can only be properly remunerated by the supervisor being paid on the Soulbury B Scale for Senior and Principal Educational Psychologists.

The government begins to address this issue in the Children's Workforce Strategy Update Spring 2007.² "The Commitment – to examine urgently the promotion of better frontline supervision for the workforce dealing with the most vulnerable children, including those who are in care, children in need of protection and disabled children with complex needs."³ The response to this commitment is given in terms of the provision of National Occupational Standards. Those standards produced by the British Psychological Society endorse the

² DfES (2007) Children's Workforce Strategy: Update-Spring 2007 Building a world-class workforce for children, young people and families Chapter 6.

³ (ibid page 29).

view that only those qualified as educational psychologists can provide appropriate professional supervision of educational psychologists.

There are other difficulties created when educational psychology services *per se* are disbanded and educational psychologists are organised and managed solely through area multi-disciplinary teams and there is no professional lead for educational psychology that is able to input at a strategic and authority wide level. Significant issues include matters of equality, deployment, continuous professional development and equipment. The Workforce strategy response to the commitment to develop a vision of leadership comments on the need for leaders and managers who "...can develop a vision for children's services in their area/sphere of responsibility and can communicate that clearly and persuasively to others...."⁴ Without a principal educational psychologist it is not possible to provide that voice for educational psychology within a local authority. The Soulbury Report endorses this view, "Principal educational psychologists are the officers to whom has been assigned the responsibility for organising and managing the educational psychology service and accountability for the professional work of the LEA's (sic) other educational psychologists." (para 4.8). It is equally interesting that the Soulbury Report places "managing and organising" before "professional responsibility".

⁴ (ibid page 28).

3. Retaining Educational Psychology Services

The AEP has a clear view that the organisation and management of educational psychologists should be within a structure that acknowledges and supports the operation of an educational psychology service for the following reasons:

- i. Educational psychologists need the collegiate support of colleagues to maintain their professional integrity and to ensure that the specific skills for which they were included in the team are not subsumed within a multidisciplinary culture, which will destroy the point of bringing distinct professions together.

Collegiate working with colleagues not only encourages the perseverance of profession-specific thinking and working, it also provides the most appropriate sources of support. Educational psychology is complex and intense work that places pressures on individuals in their own specific way. It is difficult for anyone without the background and experience in educational psychology to understand these pressures and how specifically to help a professional to respond to them. Working within a team of educational psychologists allows individuals access to occasional and off-the-cuff peer support at times of greatest need.

- ii. Whole service organisation means individuals can develop areas of specialist knowledge and expertise. This can then be shared across the service and hence become accessible to all the stakeholders in the authority.

There are economy-of-scale advantages to whole service organisation. The larger the pool of psychologists available to a manager the greater flexibility that manager has for releasing time for the development of specialisms and the broader the range of specialisms within a service can be. This can be particularly advantageous to authorities in their supporting often the most 'expensive' children who have highly significant but very low incidence special needs. As educational psychologists develop their own skills, knowledge and experience with these highly complex needs they are able to skill up and begin to empower the authority's ability to respond to the children's needs.

- iii. The direct management of educational psychologists by, for example, schools militates against the proper development of individuals as psychologists and the strategic function of educational psychology services.
- iv. An authority based educational psychology service ensures equity of service provision to all schools and families, based on need. Work in schools is negotiated with individual schools and organised to meet the needs of the children, schools and families throughout and across an authority, including those children and young people not in school.

Of course issues can be resolved at an area level by ensuring that the staffing and provision available to each area manager is needs based in relation to the area for which they are responsible. However, even areas within authorities may find themselves overcome and stretched by the sudden high incidence of significant needs that frequently occurs but is evened out over time and across whole authority areas.

- v. Locality managed educational psychology services raises issues of equity in the provision of equipment for individual psychologists and services to children. Similarly, it creates possibilities of lack of equity in provision of Continuous Professional Development.
- vi. Whole service management allows for a flexible approach and affords protection against simplistic views of the educational psychologist's role. There is protection for children in the authority in terms of service delivery being based on pupil need, rather than, for example, the organisational needs of specific schools or areas.
- vii. The specific small and discrete nature of the profession creates the opposite of economies of scale when looking at the developmental costs for professionally specific CPD and equipment. The lack of a specific or hypothecated budget held and negotiated centrally on behalf of the educational psychologists of an authority will significantly threaten funding opportunities for these relatively expensive items. In the medium term this will have a deleterious effect on a local authority's ability to deliver an effective and up to date psychology service. Issues of this nature, for example having used the up to date edition of an expensive test, have already caused difficulties for local authorities at particular SENDIST tribunals.

Each Children's Services Authority (CSA) shall maintain an authority wide educational psychology service.

Such a service shall be characterised by:

- o **Leadership by a Principal Educational Psychologist**
- o **Responsibility for supervision of the professional practice of the authority's educational psychologists**
- o **Shared responsibility for the performance management of educational psychologists, particularly in relation to matters of professional practice**
- o **The authority to intervene in relation to professional decisions at area management levels**
- o **Representation of the professional view and needs of the educational psychology team at senior management level in the Children's Services Authority**
- o **Leadership of the frequent meetings of managers within the service**
- o **A capacity to operate and participate at a strategic and authority level**
- o **Shared opportunities and budgets for Continuing Professional Development**
- o **Capacity to budget for professionally specific materials and equipment e.g. major tests**

4. Effective Leadership of Educational Psychology Services

Effective leadership of an educational psychology service, almost by definition, requires the appointment of a principal educational psychologist with management responsibilities. In some local authorities an alternative title to principal educational psychologist may be chosen. However, that title should be for a singular position open only to a fully qualified educational psychologist. Proposals otherwise would be contrary to the Government's agenda for Change for Children and the "Children's Workforce Strategy: the Government's response to the consultation". The need for good leadership (paras 3.48 & 2.4), and appropriate and professional supervision particularly for those working with children with complex needs (paras 3.53 & 2.4) is made very clear. The response reminds us that, "High staff turnover is. ...strongly associated with poor leadership and supervision." Lack of professional leadership will inevitably lead to professional dissatisfaction among an authority's other educational psychologists. A lack of appropriately combined organisational and professional leadership will lead to a subsequent erosion of staffing levels at a time of shortage within our profession.

Logistical and Professional Management of Educational Psychology Services

Changes to Children's Services have led some authorities to consider matrix management and the removal of direct management of educational psychology teams by a principal educational psychologist. A non-educational psychologist within multi-disciplinary teams may provide some day-to-day management of operational activity. However, there should be professional oversight of the day-to-day management and a strategic lead provided for educational psychology in any authority by an appropriately qualified principal educational psychologist. In those situations where an authority has chosen to deploy educational psychologists on an area basis, someone from a different professional background may deliver the day-to-day management of an educational psychologist. In such cases the AEP expects that every educational psychologist will have the right to refer to an appropriately qualified principal educational psychologist for supervision of their practice and to intervene when professionally inappropriate directions have been given.

Any reorganisation proposal should indicate how the professional leadership and management of educational psychologists requiring professional management and supervision from within their professional domain will be maintained. The Soulbury Committee, in its description of the role of the principal educational psychologist, has been clear about this necessity and the professional and strategic leadership that post should provide. We have noted above the comment in the Soulbury Report that; "Principal educational psychologists are the officers to whom has been assigned the responsibility for organising and managing the educational psychology service and accountability for the professional work of the LEA's other educational psychologists." (Para 4.8) The Soulbury Report places "managing and organising" before "professional responsibility".

Each Children's Services Authority educational psychology service shall be led by a principal educational psychologist who is fully qualified and registered to practise as an educational psychologist.

Educational psychologists shall have a right of access to the principal educational psychologist for supervision and for intervention on their behalf when line managers may have given professionally inappropriate directions.

The AEP expects that the professional input from principal educational psychologists will be significant and of intrinsic value to his or her local authority. Professional input from the principal educational psychologist as a professional lead of the team of educational psychologists should not only be available to individuals and the educational psychology team but should also be accessible by the local authority at a strategic authority level

The principal educational psychologist in any authority shall provide, as a minimum, the professional lead for the psychology services and a professional input at individual, team and authority-wide levels.

Professional and Career Development

The Government's response to the Children's Workforce Strategy consultation clearly states the desire to promote training and development of the Children's Workforce. (paras 1.2 & 1.10) Educational psychology will become a regulated profession with a specified requirement to engage regularly in appropriate continuing professional development. The Soulbury Committee has acknowledged this specifically for educational psychologists and for all Soulbury Officers. New arrangements should give reassurance about the processes that would allow educational psychologists to meet the statutory requirements for continuing professional development so as to allow them to continue to practise.

Management Tier for Principal Educational Psychologists

Principal educational psychologists have traditionally been placed at the third tier of management structures (or fourth tier in larger shire counties). The merger of Education and Children's Social Services Departments into Children's Services Authorities (CSAs) has often created very large organisations with additional levels of management. Consequently principal educational psychologists are now often placed at lower tiers of management than they might previously have expected. The introduction of matrix management, where fully implemented, has removed some of the hierarchical nature of management within CSAs.

The AEP is aware of the importance still to some members of the tier of management at which the principal educational psychologist is placed. However, it also acknowledges that this is becoming less significant almost everywhere and in some authorities an irrelevance. What is important to the AEP is that the principal educational psychologist shall have access to managers who have appropriate decision-making authority.

Where the principal educational psychologist in any Children's Services Authority is not a member of its senior management team he or she shall have appropriate direct access to a senior manager of that authority who can directly protect the interests and represent the views of the Educational Psychology Service to the Senior Management Team.

Development of Re-structuring Proposals

Any re-structuring proposals should include what measures to "...identify and match resources to particular actions..." were taken to inform the proposals. (As recommended in the Children's Workforce Strategy (para 2.15). The AEP should seek to know what measures were taken, before the proposals were raised, to "...identify and match resources

to particular actions...” as recommended in the Children’s Workforce Strategy (para 2.15). This is of course a different approach to the solution focused ‘how do we integrate services’ and the workforce generated by logistical demands of meeting other requirements of education directives, for example, that schools are the primary delivers of services and therefore should control those services. The latter kind of solution misunderstands the underlying concept of multi-disciplinary teamwork; that are bringing together individuals from different professional backgrounds and groups to share responsibility and decision-making about children and families strengthens delivery.

Any Children’s Services Authority making re-structuring proposals involving educational psychologists should indicate what measures to “...identify and match resources to particular actions...” were taken to inform the proposals, (as recommended in the Children’s Workforce Strategy [para 2.15]).

5 The Role of the Principal Educational Psychologist

It is appropriate at this time of radical change in the way services are delivered to children to look at the role of educational psychology and how it should be led and managed. Children's Services Authorities are being formed at a time of stringency in local government budgets, which may encourage directors to look for savings as they create new structures in their services. Often within such new proposals there is a significant lack of any indication of how the professional leadership and management of educational psychologists, as a discrete professional group that do require professional management and supervision from within their professional domain, will be available. As noted above, the Soulbury Committee have been very clear in their report about this necessity in their description of the role of the principal educational psychologist and the professional and strategic leadership that post should provide. (Para 4.8)

AEP believes that, at a very minimum, every Children's Services Authority shall have a principal educational psychologist who will provide the professional lead for educational psychologists in that authority. That role will require a professional input from the principal educational psychologist at individual, team and strategic levels. The special nature of the work of educational psychology suggests that the principal educational psychologist shall have a specific commissioning role. This role with the professional lead is essential to ensure appropriate quality assurance in the delivery of educational psychology services for and to children and young people.

The AEP believes that proposals that indicate deletion of principal educational psychologist posts are contrary to the Government's agenda for Change for Children. "The Children's Workforce Strategy: The Government's response to the consultation" is very clear about the need for good leadership (paras 3.48 & 2.4), and, appropriate and professional supervision particularly for those working with children with complex needs (paras 3.53 & 2.4). The response reminds us that "High staff turnover is strongly associated with poor leadership and supervision." The AEP has little doubt that removing principal educational psychologist posts will lead to dissatisfaction for educational psychologists given the lack of appropriately combined organisational and professional leadership and will therefore lead to a subsequent erosion of staffing levels at a time of shortage within this key professional group.

The principal educational psychologists should have a strategic role within an authority, being the focus of the psychological thought and knowledge in the authority. The principal educational psychologist is the representative of psychology in the authority and without a principal educational psychologist at an appropriate level in the management structures the input of psychology to strategic decision making will be absent.

Educational psychology services provide an active research base for the origination of new ideas and activities and for the development of those ideas, policies and strategies within a local authority. Without a principal educational psychologist and with educational psychologists only active in area teams the direction of such research and innovation is lost at an authority level. This will impact significantly over time on the development and quality of services available to children. Not only that, it will also impact on the educational psychologists; individual educational psychologists will lose CPD and developmental opportunities if they are not able to meet together and work at an authority level. This will affect the ability of a service to retain qualified educational psychologists.

Maintaining EP Teams and or Services

At a whole service level, one of the distinct advantages of an authority based service is that there can be an equity and consistency of service provided to schools, based on need, often

negotiated with individual schools, but still organised to meet the needs of the children of the schools and the whole authority. There is the question of equity in the provision of equipment for individual psychologists. Whole service management also allows for flexibility of approach and affords some protection against the few headteachers with a simplistic view of our role and some protection for children across the authority in terms of appropriate service delivery, in terms of pupil need rather than pressure on individual educational psychologists to meet organisational needs of particular schools. Whole service organisation also means that individuals can develop areas of specialist knowledge and expertise that can then be shared across the service and thereby become accessible to all the schools in the authority; a sense of the whole being greater than the sum of the parts. The role of the principal educational psychologist relates to the professional leadership of such teams and in ensuring the equity and consistency of provision across the authority.

Area Management

Many authorities are moving towards area management of delivery but accepting the professional role needs to be led by a principal educational psychologist or equivalent. One question raised in negotiations where the principal educational psychologist role has been reduced to the professional lead has been what then constitutes an educational psychology team or service. The minimum position that is acceptable to the AEP is one where there are regular meetings of the principal educational psychologist with the senior educational psychologists and regular meetings of the whole team, the latter usually with a CPD focus, and the leadership and existence of these meetings are reflected appropriately in relevant job descriptions. It is becoming increasingly apparent that some authorities will legitimately seek to delegate the day-to-day management of professional activities to area teams, which may not be managed by an educational psychologist. However, the AEP continues to insist that individual educational psychologists should always have the right to appeal to the principal educational psychologist to intervene when they are given directions that are not thought to be professionally appropriate. This responsibility should be written into any principal educational psychologist's job description in those authorities where area management pertains.

Some larger authorities have elected to have area teams of educational psychologists managed locally by senior educational psychologists. The AEP has no difficulty with this model as it reflects what has been traditional practice in some local authorities. However, the AEP does not accept that this is a justifiable reason for deleting the post of the Principal Educational Psychologist. Quite to the contrary the AEP believes that this type of organisational structure makes the existence of a principal educational psychologist even more necessary and essential, to ensure both equality and consistency of service to children, schools and families. Similarly, the AEP is not able to accept that one of a group of area senior educational psychologists should also be the principal educational psychologist. Such an organisational structure will inevitably lead to conflicts of interests between that area role and the authority-wide role. Therefore, such a combination of roles is, on the grounds of equality of opportunity, unacceptable.

In any authority the role and responsibilities of the principal educational psychologist shall be distinct from those of any senior educational psychologists with area management responsibility and must not be combined with such a senior post.

Supervision

Supervision within educational psychology practice has specific meanings. In best practice it combines both collegiate support with oversight of 'clinical practice'. Within most educational psychology services supervision combines support and oversight function with line management functions. Clearly the 'clinical oversight' role can only be fulfilled by a qualified educational psychologist (see chapter 1 page 6) and the support role is usually best provided by someone from the same profession, although it is accepted that in some management structures the line management of individuals can be separated out from the professional elements of support and supervision.

For reasons of professional necessity the principal educational psychologist has to have overall responsibility for the professional supervision of all educational psychologists in the authority. At the same time it should be acknowledged that professional supervision and line management have areas of overlap and activities can often be taken in one domain to support needs in the other. Good practice will therefore reflect this and ensure that the principal educational psychologist has shared responsibilities for the performance management of the educational psychologists in the authority.

CPD (see also strategic above)

The Government's response to the Children's Workforce Strategy consultation clearly states the Government's desire to promote training and development of the Children's Workforce. (paras 1.2 & 1.10) Given the proposals, it is difficult to see how the new arrangements will be able to afford educational psychologists with appropriately funded opportunities for continuing professional development. In addition, educational psychology is shortly to become a regulated profession with a specified requirement on educational psychologists to engage regularly in appropriate continuing professional development (CPD). The Soulbury Committee has acknowledged this CPD need specifically for educational psychologists and for all Soulbury workers generally. The AEP will seek reassurance about the processes that would allow educational psychologists to meet the forthcoming statutory requirements for continuing professional development to allow them to continue to practise. Principal educational psychologists should have access to hypothecated funds that will meet the CPD needs of the educational psychologists in his or her authority. These funds should be linked to other hypothecated funds that exist as an acknowledgement of the high cost of profession-specific equipment and materials such as major test items.

Career Development (see also strategic above)

The principal educational psychologist should have a role in the career development of colleagues. Clearly the principal educational psychologist should lead on the appointment and induction of new colleagues working for the authority. Also, as professional lead, the responsibility for the appointment and learning of all trainee educational psychologists can only reside with the principal educational psychologist.

The removal of a principal educational psychologist post is the removal of one level of career opportunity for educational psychologists. As noted above, the Children's Workforce Strategy indicates that professionals need to have good career development prospects.

An unexpected consequence of area management and the merger of several professional groups is that it makes educational psychologists vulnerable. Educational psychologists, as a reflection of the intensity, complexity and responsibilities of their role, are often the best paid among the variety of professionals that come together in area teams. As a result the salaries on offer for leadership of area teams often reflect the salary structures of other groups and are not attractive, therefore, to educational psychologists. Salaries can become,

therefore, disincentives to career progression within children's services for educational psychologists.

As a minimum the principal educational psychologist's role in a Children's Services Authority shall include:

- **Professional leadership of the educational psychology team**
- **Responsibility for supervision of the professional practice of the authority's educational psychologists**
- **Shared responsibility for the performance management of educational psychologists, particularly in relation to matters of professional practice**
- **The authority to intervene in relation to professional decisions at area management levels**
- **Representation of the professional view and needs of the educational psychology team at senior management level in the Children's Services Authority**
- **Leadership of the frequent meetings of managers within the service**
- **Operation and participation at a strategic and authority level**
- **Management of a hypothecated budget for Continuing Professional Development and professionally specific material e.g. major tests**
- **Shared responsibility for the professional induction of all colleagues new to the service**
- **Shared responsibility for the appointment of educational psychologists to the authority.**
- **Responsibility for the Authority's role in the engagement and training of Trainee Educational Psychologists**

Statutory Regulation and the Principal Educational Psychologist

The principal educational psychologist has by definition and the nature of his or her work to be a fully qualified educational psychologist. The imperative that demands this is the need to be appropriately qualified to provide the oversight of the 'clinical practice' of colleague educational psychologists within the local authority. In order to maintain their right to practise which includes the provision of appropriate supervision to educational psychologists, any principal educational psychologist will need to maintain their registration with the regulator; the Health Professions Council. Local authorities will need to provide the appropriate level of support and access to continuous professional development that will allow for continuing registration.

In order to continue to practise and to provide professional oversight of colleagues, principal educational psychologists shall maintain their registration with the statutory regulator, the Health Professions Council.

Time Allocated to Managing Educational Psychology Services

Traditionally the principal educational psychologist has had a full allocation of his/her time to concentrate on the work involved in leading an educational psychology team. That leadership would involve a wide range of duties, including representation of the educational psychology service at various meetings and activities within a local authority, leading the training and development of the service and its members and providing supervision and

support to team members. The duties involved in management of educational psychology services vary from authority to authority, as does the size of educational psychology services. This makes it impossible to specify the amount of time that is a satisfactory minimum for such duties. However, there are specific tasks that need to be undertaken and it is the size of these, which is often related to the size of the educational psychology service, which will dictate the actual time that needs to be allocated.

This document indicates certain key activities (see above) that have to be undertaken by a principal educational psychologist. Quantification of the time demands of some of these activities in any particular authority, based on historical evidence, will be possible. In some cases formulae can be developed to assist in the calculations.

In some authorities the principal educational psychologist delegates some of the activities to deputies or other senior people in the service. Where this happens the principal educational psychologist will need to set aside an element of time for the proper oversight management of such delegated activity.

In some authorities, and especially since the establishment of Children's Services Authorities, principal educational psychologists have been given additional responsibilities. The AEP welcomes this; not least as an indication of the abilities of the profession and the quality and extent of its transferable skills. However, the allocation of additional duties should not adversely affect the time available to the principal educational psychologist to carry out the essential managerial and leadership functions he or she has in relation to the educational psychology service. In many authorities this conundrum has been solved by the creation of an additional senior educational psychologist post with managerial functions. Such solutions maintain the managerial capacity within educational psychology services.

Principal educational psychologists should have adequate time available to them to carry out all the necessary management and leadership functions of their posts.

Where the duties of principal educational psychologists are extensive, it will be necessary to create sufficient promoted posts within the educational psychology service to allow for adequate and appropriate delegation of the managerial and leadership functions of the principal educational psychologist.

January 2008

AEP Policy Statements In Relation To The Management Of Educational Psychology Services And The Role Of Principal Educational Psychologists.

Supervision

- All educational psychologists have the right to and should expect appropriate supervision of their work.
- With the exception of principal educational psychologists, a qualified educational psychologist should provide all such supervision.
- The 'clinical practice' of principal educational psychologists should always be supervised by other qualified educational psychologists.
- The provision of supervision to educational psychologists entails professional and managerial responsibilities at such a level that this amount of responsibility can only be properly remunerated by the supervisor being paid on the Soulbury B Scale for Senior and Principal Educational Psychologists

Educational Psychology Services

- Each Children's Services Authority (CSA) shall maintain an authority-wide educational psychology service. Such a service shall be characterised by:
 - o Leadership by a principal educational psychologist
 - o Responsibility for supervision of the professional practice of the authority's educational psychologists
 - o Shared responsibility for the performance management of educational psychologists, particularly in relation to matters of professional practice
 - o The authority to intervene in relation to professional decisions at area management levels
 - o Representation of the professional view and needs of the educational psychology team at senior management level in the Children's Services Authority
 - o Leadership at the frequent meetings of managers within the service
 - o A capacity to operate and participate at a strategic and authority level
 - o Shared opportunities and budgets for Continuing Professional Development
 - o Capacity to budget for professionally specific materials and equipment e.g. major tests

The Leadership of Educational Psychology Services

- Each Children's Services Authority educational psychology service shall be led by a principal educational psychologist who is fully qualified and registered to practise as an educational psychologist.
- Principal educational psychologists should have adequate time available to carry out all the necessary management and leadership functions of their posts.

- Where the duties of principal educational psychologists are extensive it will be necessary to create sufficient promoted posts within the educational psychology service to allow for adequate and appropriate delegation of the managerial and leadership functions of the principal educational psychologist.
- Educational psychologists shall have a right of access to the principal educational psychologist for supervision and for intervention on their behalf when line managers may have given professionally inappropriate directions.
- The principal educational psychologist in any authority shall provide, as a minimum, the professional lead for the psychology services and a professional input at individual, team and authority-wide levels.
- Where the principal educational psychologist in any Children's Services Authority is not a member of its senior management team he or she shall have appropriate direct access to a senior manager of that authority who can directly protect the interests and represent the views of the educational psychology service to the senior management team.
- Any Children's Services Authority making re-structuring proposals involving educational psychologists should indicate what measures to "...identify and match resources to particular actions..." were taken to inform the proposals. (As recommended in the Children's Workforce Strategy (para 2.15).

Principal Educational Psychologists

- In any authority the role and responsibilities of the principal educational psychologist shall be distinct from those of any senior educational psychologists with area management responsibility and must not be combined with such a senior post.
- As a minimum, the principal educational psychologist's role in a Children's Services Authority shall include:
 - o Professional leadership of the educational psychology team
 - o Responsibility for supervision of the 'clinical practice' of the authority's educational psychologists
 - o Shared responsibility for the performance management of educational psychologists, particularly in relation to matters of professional practice
 - o The authority to intervene in relation to professional decisions at area management levels
 - o Representation of the professional view and needs of the educational psychology team at senior management level in the Children's Services Authority
 - o Leadership of the frequent meetings of managers within the service
 - o Operation and participation at a strategic and authority level
 - o Management of a hypothecated budget for Continuing Professional Development and professionally specific material e.g. major tests
 - o Shared responsibility for the professional induction of all colleagues new to the service
 - o Shared responsibility for the appointment of educational psychologists to the Authority.
 - o Responsibility for the Authority's role in the engagement and training of trainee educational psychologists

- In order to continue to practise and to provide professional oversight of colleagues, principal educational psychologists shall maintain their registration with the statutory regulator, the Health Professions Council.
- Principal educational psychologists should have adequate time available to them to carry out all the necessary management and leadership functions of their posts.
- Where the duties of principal educational psychologists are extensive it will be necessary to create sufficient promoted posts within the educational psychology service to allow for adequate and appropriate delegation of the managerial and leadership functions of the principal educational psychologist.

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