



## Guidance for Best Practice: Working with Children and Young People (CYP) in 1:1 Situations

**Guiding principles:** *As Educational Psychologists, our work with CYP should support and promote their human rights. At each stage it is therefore important to take account of their views, support their wellbeing and engage with them in partnership, taking the least intrusive approach to assessment and respecting their right to privacy in the information we gather and the records we keep.*

### Prior to working with the child or young person

- If you are employed, ensure that your practice is in line with your employer's guidance as well as HCPC and BPS standards for practice.
- If you are self-employed, your own procedures for working 1:1 with CYP should be clearly outlined on your website or practice agreement and should be in line with HCPC and BPS standards for practice.
- Ensure that all relevant guidance is shared with parents/carers and the educational or care setting.
- Ensure that the CYP is aware of the fact you are visiting and the purpose of your visit. You may wish for a member of staff to talk to the CYP in advance of your visit about what an educational psychologist does and what type of work you propose to do with them. Educational Psychology services should have documents which they can share that outline the role of the EP for children, parents/carers, and practitioners.
- On the day of your visit, check in with parent/carer or responsible member of staff to ensure that the CYP is aware of the purpose of your visit, is still happy to work with you and that there are no reasons why the session should not proceed.

### To ensure the agreement and safety of the child or young person during your direct work:

- Explain who you are and the purpose of your visit at the outset, as well as what you plan to do. Check-in with the CYP to ensure that they are happy to work with you.
- Explain to the CYP what you will be doing with the information you gather (e.g. writing a report, sharing information with the ALNCo/SENCo, sharing your thoughts with their parents/carers). Note any views the CYP expresses regarding information sharing and take account of these if they request information NOT to be shared with any individual.
- Explain to the young person that, if they talk about anything that raises a safeguarding issue, you will have to share this with a relevant member of staff.
- Check-in with the CYP at regular points to ensure that they are happy to continue. Give the opportunity for breaks if required.



- Ensure that the child has easy access to the exit of the room and that you are not blocking the way.
- Many older CYP will be able to understand a spoken explanation and give a spoken response. Some older CYP and younger children, may not have the language skills to engage verbally and may need a pictorial representation, using symbols or signs. For others you should watch for signs of disengagement or discomfort that may indicate they do not wish to continue working with you.

### **To ensure the safety of the EP:**

- Ensure that you are either:
  - In a room with windows where nearby staff/adult can see the work you are doing with the CYP, or
  - Accompanied by a member of staff.
  - Arrange the seating to enable easy access to an exit.
  - If working with a child at home, ensure a parent/carer remains in the house at all times on the same floor and the door of the room in which you are working is open.
- If there is a possibility that the CYP you are working with may experience dysregulation, you should also ensure the following:
  - That an additional member of staff is present. This should be someone who the CYP knows and trusts who is able to support them in managing their emotions.
  - That you have easy access to an exit.
  - That you have been informed of any potential triggers that might cause the child to dysregulate, so you can adapt the direct work appropriately

### **What are the responsibilities of the setting?**

- EP and CYP should be provided with appropriate floor space, seat, and table arrangements for the type of work being undertaken. These should allow both the EP and the CYP to sit comfortably and give both individuals enough space to carry out the direct work. The room should be a comfortable temperature, and it should be well ventilated. It should be a pleasant and familiar environment for the CYP.
- EP should be provided with an appropriate space to work with the CYP that allows for a degree of privacy whilst still ensuring that a member of staff is able to observe your direct work with the CYP.
- A member of staff should be available at the end of the session for you to hand the child over to and share any initial information it may be helpful for the setting to know, e.g. the child may be tired; the CYP may have shared upsetting information that might make it hard for them simply to slip back into class; the CYP may have shared some information about the behaviour of others that needs to be addressed immediately etc.



### **If a child makes a safeguarding disclosure:**

- If a CYP makes a safeguarding disclosure when working with them at home, ensure that you follow the safeguarding procedures of your organisation/service, or your own agreed procedures if you are self-employed.
- When working with a CYP in an educational or care setting, the setting will have a safeguarding policy that should be followed.
- However, in the immediate moments following a disclosure:
  - Make sure to keep a neutral face and not ask any leading questions. Carefully record what the CYP has said in a written document. Share this document with the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) in the setting. Take appropriate steps to ensure that the CYP is not experiencing distress as a result of the disclosure. If they are, alert an appropriate member of staff who can support the CYP.
  - Ask the school-based DSL what actions they are going to take to ensure the safety of the CYP. Follow-up with the DSL at an appropriate future date to ensure that they took appropriate actions to ensure CYP safety.
  - If you are employed ensure that you follow the safeguarding procedures of your organisation/service.
  - If you are self-employed ensure that you file this document appropriately.

### **Useful Resources:**

- [Safeguarding Children and Young People: Every Psychologist's Responsibility | BPS](#)
- [Safeguarding and Child Protection | Education Authority Northern Ireland \(eani.org.uk\)](#)
- [Keeping children safe in education 2021 \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)
- [Scottish Government Child Protection and Safeguarding](#)
- [Safeguarding guidance | GOV.WALES](#)