**Educational Psychology in the Community Ltd (EPiC)**

Applying psychology to find a way forward

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**Educational Psychologist Consultation**

Dr Emma Rawlings works with South Essex Extended Services providing psychological support via EPiC (Educational Psychology in the Community Ltd). Emma is Chartered Psychologist and an associate fellow of the British Psychological Society. She is registered to practice with the Health and Care Professionals Council (HCPC). Educational psychologists work in a number of ways to try and support schools, pupils and their families. When things are tricky and a school have tried all of their own ideas they have the option of arranging an EP consultation.

Emma offers regular consultations across the district to school staff. A consultation is a very focused meeting between staff that work with a pupil and the EP. In a consultation psychological thinking is used to find a way forward when things are complicated.

Typically a psychologist helps staff to describe the scope and strength of the problem. The involved professionals work together to identify important environmental conditions that influence the problem and consider if changes can be made that might help to make a positive impact on the situation. Often the consultation involves a discussion about baseline data, things that have worked and things that are not going so well, it maybe that the staff will need to go away and find out some more information and book another consultation session in the future.

At the heart of the approach lies a conversational shift. The aim is to move the everyone involved from a problem dominated conversation to a solution-oriented one. In the long term staff are building on their resilience to solve their own problems independently as they have learnt the skills to focus on solutions whatever the problem. Emma works with a belief that there are always exceptions, that is, times when the problem is less or absent and that small changes can lead to widespread changes, essentially if it works do more of it; if it doesn’t, do something different.