

MEMO

From: Stephen Higgins
DSEP West & Breckland

To:

Ref:

cc:

Date: 1st July 2013

Specialist Support Assistants Autistic Spectrum Disorder

You will be aware that the team of ASD SSAs who operate under the umbrella of Education Psychology and Specialist Support (EPSS) have been retained as part of the core service to schools. It has been the practice to secure the services of this team through the completion of a Request for Intervention form (Rfi) completed by the key person in the school or EY setting and a member of the School Support Team, latterly the Child Education Support Team, from this service.

In September 2013 the composition of EPSS will alter with the decommissioning of the Advisory Learning Support Teacher team. Nonetheless, each cluster will continue to have a named Education Psychologist linked to the cluster and one day a term will be available to the cluster as part of the core offer.

It is important that the function of the ASD SSA team is not compromised by these changes. In addition the principal of the ASD SSA undertaking a specific piece of work as requested by school/setting and EPSS staff to ensure that requests remain appropriate needs to be maintained. This is also important in respect of the ASD SSA not being seen as a keyworker with case responsibility, rather as a professional making a specific contribution.

Therefore I propose that the route to accessing the expertise of the ASD SSA team remains through EPSS and the arrangement with the named EP for each cluster will support this. Within the day per term allocated to each cluster, it should be practicable for a discussion to take place and the corresponding form to be completed. In some cases the discussion may be by telephone or electronic means rather than a face-to-face meeting.

In Early Years settings, Rfi forms should be completed jointly by the key person in the setting and the Early Years Adviser.

The ASD SSA team continue to provide high quality and well-regarded interventions which range from advice and consultation to a series of up to 4 or 6 sessions with individuals and groups of children to address particular issues. Training, both informal and formal, remains an important part of the delivery model. The team also support parent programmes such as Earlybird and Cygnet through joint work with Health colleagues.