Schools provide guidance to pupils on subjects and courses and future careers. Through their pastoral role, they also provide emotional support and counselling. Other guidance and counselling support that pupils may access includes educational psychology services, which are usually provided by the local authority (LA); Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) provided by the National Health Service (NHS Wales); and external careers guidance and support. The subheadings which follow provide further information.

**Academic guidance**

Guidance on subjects and courses is usually referred to as educational guidance. Schools decide how to provide such guidance for all pupils, including those with special educational needs (SEN). Most schools provide additional support for key events in a pupil’s school life, such as moving from one class to the next, generally through familiarisation sessions in the new class or talks by the new teacher.

Secondary schools may designate a member of staff to have specific responsibility for primary-secondary school liaison. These staff visit the primary schools from which pupils will be joining their school, and arrange visits to the secondary school and activity sessions to help orientate incoming pupils.

Pupils in secondary schools may be divided into ‘tutor groups’ within their year groups, with a designated teacher who has pastoral care responsibilities. Pupils in secondary education also usually receive additional support and guidance when selecting subject and examination options. A key transition point is the move to post-compulsory sixth form education when they are aged around 16.

**Psychological counselling**

Psychological counselling available to pupils includes independent and school-based counselling services, services provided through the local authority (LA) educational psychology service, and Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS), provided by the National Health Service (NHS Wales). The subheadings which follow provide further information.

**Independent and school-based counselling**

Independent counselling is one-to-one support provided by a trained professional counsellor to children and young people who are experiencing problems, and who are most commonly referred by their pastoral care teachers. Counselling supports the health, emotional and social needs of children and young people and should complement the work being carried out in schools and other educational settings to promote the well-being of learners.
Since 1 April 2013, under Section 92 of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013, local authorities have had a statutory duty to provide an independent counselling service to children and young people between the ages of 11 and 18 in their area. This duty also extends to pupils in Year 6 (aged 10–11) of primary school. The service must be provided on the site of each school that the LA maintains that provides secondary education. A local authority may also offer counselling services at other locations, e.g. in independent schools, further education colleges, or other community facilities.

Statutory guidance (June 2013) on the provision of independent counselling services is available.

The introduction of the statutory requirement to provide independent counselling services followed the publication, in 2009, of a national strategy for delivering school-based counselling services in Wales, and the 2011 publication of a school-based counselling operating toolkit, developed in association with the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP).

The Welsh Government has also published guidance for schools on setting up and effectively running nurture groups in primary and secondary schools. These groups provide support for children with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties in the form of small discrete classes, which provide a safe and predictable structured environment where children are given opportunities to revisit early missed ‘nurturing’ experiences.

The British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP) website provides further information on school-based counselling, and the Welsh Government publishes an annual statistical summary of the provision of independent counselling services.

**Educational psychologists**

Educational psychologists (EPs) are concerned with helping children and young people experiencing problems within an educational setting. The main aim of the EP’s work is to support children and young people’s development, well-being, resilience, learning and achievement.

The majority of EPs in Wales are employed by the local authority (LA), although some work in private practice. Every LA has an educational psychology service (EPS), but there are variations in service delivery to meet local needs.

Educational psychologists have a central role in the statutory assessment process for children who may need statements of special educational needs (SEN) – see the article on ‘Special Needs Provision within Mainstream Education,’ and also contribute to behavioural support work and early intervention. An EP might work with single pupils or groups of pupils, and his or her work may involve those with learning difficulties or social and emotional problems. He or she also advises teachers, parents, social workers and other professionals involved with the child.

Educational psychologists:

- assess the child by means of observation, test materials and interviews
- formulate interventions that bring together knowledge, skills and expertise and also support national and local initiatives
- develop and apply interventions to promote psychological well-being, social and emotional and behavioural development and raise educational standards. Interventions might include learning programmes and collaboration with parents and teachers
- develop and support therapeutic behaviour management programmes
- produce formal written reports recommending actions to be taken.
They also offer training to teachers and other professionals on topics such as the effective management of stress or behaviour, and work on projects either with teachers on topics such as bullying, or with pupils.

The Welsh Government has published guidance [16] for education professionals and parents/carers on the role and responsibilities of EPs, and the services they provide in supporting learners from the early years to post-16 education.

**Training, registration and accreditation**

Educational psychologists usually have specialist graduate and postgraduate qualifications in applying psychology in education; a detailed understanding of child development and special educational needs (SEN) [2]; and substantial experience supporting children and young people.

Responsibility for accreditation for educational psychologists' training in the UK is held by the British Psychological Society [17] and, once qualified, all EPs must register with the Health and Care Professions Council [18] which is the regulatory organisation for educational psychologists.

For further information on the training and pay and conditions of EPs, see the subheading ‘Educational psychologists’ [19]’ in the article on 'Education Staff Responsible for Guidance in Early Childhood and School Education'.

**Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS)**

Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) are specialist mental health services offering assessment and treatment when children and young people have emotional, behavioural or mental health difficulties. CAMHS are provided by the National Health Service (NHS Wales).

Young people might be referred to CAMHS to help them deal with a number of disorders or issues such as attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), anxiety, autism, behavioural problems, bullying, depression, low self-esteem, sleep problems, eating disorders, self-harming, the effects of abuse or traumatic events, obsessive compulsive disorder, psychotic disorders including schizophrenia and bipolar, and substance abuse.

Teachers, doctors or nurses may refer a young person to CAMHS, whose staff include psychotherapists, mental health workers, family therapists, art therapists, doctors and nurses. Interventions might involve talking therapies (such as counselling or cognitive behavioural therapy) or prescription medicine, or can depend on what local support is available. The services are usually based in clinics but school or home visits are also possible. Services can be multi-agency and should have links with other relevant services, including schools, social services and counselling services. Ideally, parents and carers are also involved in the interventions. Additional services such as advocacy, interpreters, or services providing assistance for those with communication difficulties or additional learning needs can be involved to make CAMHS more accessible.

In 2015, the Welsh Government also launched the 'Together for Children and Young People Programme’ (T4CYP) to help improve emotional and mental health services for children and young people. Further information [20] on CAMHS and T4CYP is available from the Welsh Government.

**Career guidance**

The Welsh Government's framework for ‘careers and the world of work’ (CWW) and related guidance and educational materials [21] are the key documents that learning providers use in offering, reviewing
and developing careers guidance provision for pupils in secondary school.

Careers and the world of work forms a compulsory part of the basic curriculum for all pupils aged 11 to 16 in maintained schools in Wales. It may be delivered as an integrated element across a wide range of curriculum subjects, as part of a tutorial programme, through personal and social education (PSE), in separate classes or modules, through one-off events, through work-focussed activities, and where possible, work placements. Careers coordinators in schools are expected to ensure that a wide range of partners are involved in delivering CWW, including employers, entrepreneurs, advisers, parents, trainers and community groups.

The CWW framework is intended to help learners to:

- explore the attitudes and values required for employability and lifelong learning
- plan and manage their pathway through the range of opportunities in learning and work
- make effective career choices
- become entrepreneurial
- flourish in a variety of work settings
- become motivated, set long-term goals and overcome barriers
- see the relevance of their studies to their life and work
- develop key skills and other skills required by employers
- prepare for the challenges, choices and responsibilities of work and adult life.

In addition, all 14- to 19-year-old learners are entitled to access impartial and professional careers information, advice and guidance. This service is provided by Careers Wales, the all-Wales, all-age, bilingual careers information advice and guidance service. Services offered by Careers Wales include:

- impartial and independent careers information, advice and guidance face-to-face, over the telephone and online
- facilitation of links between employers, schools and colleges to enrich students’ understanding of the world of work
- capacity building to support schools with the CWW curriculum
- raising young people’s awareness of the skills requirements in their local area
- specialist support for young people with special educational needs / additional learning needs.

A report published by Estyn, the Inspectorate, in September 2017 found that pupils’ access to impartial careers advice, guidance and personal support varies considerably, and that schools need to ensure that pupils have access to up-to-date information about their options for future learning and careers.

For further information on careers educators / coordinators in schools and Careers Wales careers advisers, see the article on ‘Education Staff Responsible for Guidance in Early Childhood and School Education’.

Article last reviewed October 2018.
NO

Contact *

Message *

Leave this field blank

Source URL:

Links
[1] https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/eurydice/content/glossary-77_en#LocalAuthority(LA)
[5] https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/eurydice/content/glossary-75_en#SixthForm
[8] https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/eurydice/content/glossary-77_en#FurtherEducationCollege
[22] https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/eurydice/content/glossary-77_en#MaintainedSchool