



An Roinn Oideachais  
Department of Education

An tSeirbhís Náisiúnta Síceolaíochta Oideachais  
National Educational Psychological Service

# “Psychology in Action – Working as an Educational Psychologist in the National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS)”

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NATIONAL EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICE (NEPS)

MAYNOOTH UNIVERSITY - 07/02/2024

# SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGISTS

support students' ability to learn and teachers' ability to teach.

## THEY ARE EXPERTS IN



Learning



Behavior



Mental Health



School Systems

## THEY PROVIDE

- Academic, behavioral, and mental health supports
- Evaluation, assessment, and data analysis
- Consultation with teachers and families
- Culturally responsive services
- Crisis prevention and response



## THEY SUPPORT

- Struggling and diverse learners
- Student achievement and well-being
- Safe and supportive learning environments
- School-family-community partnerships
- School-wide data-based decision making

# Where do Educational Psychologists work?

- ▶ School system
  - ▶ National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS)-
  - ▶ Health & social care system (Birth to 18 Years)
  - ▶ HSE Child Network Disability Teams
  - ▶ HSE Child Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS)
  - ▶ HSE Primary Care Psychology
- ▶ Voluntary Bodies – e.g., Jigsaw, Enable Ireland, Central Remedial Clinic, Daughters of Charity
- ▶ Third-Level institutions - Student Support teams
- ▶ Academia/Research
- ▶ Private Practice

# What kind of work does an EP do?

- ▶ Casework –
  - ▶ Direct casework: with individual child or young person
  - ▶ Indirect Casework: with key adults in child's life
  - ▶ Assessment & Intervention
  - ▶ Learning to mental health
- ▶ Building Capacity: Support & Development work – parent groups, teacher training
- ▶ Systemic work – e.g. Responding to Critical Incidents, Wellbeing
- ▶ Influencing and development of Policy within the Department of Education and beyond (Special Education, Wellbeing office, Inspectorate, working with NCSE, HSE)
- ▶ Advocacy – Inclusion – Culture and diversity

## Areas

- Cognitive & Learning
- Language & communication
- Social & emotional
- Adaptive functioning / daily living skills
- Mental Health

## Methods

- Consultations
- Observation of the child across settings
- Standardised tests & questionnaires
- Non-standardised tools

# Casework



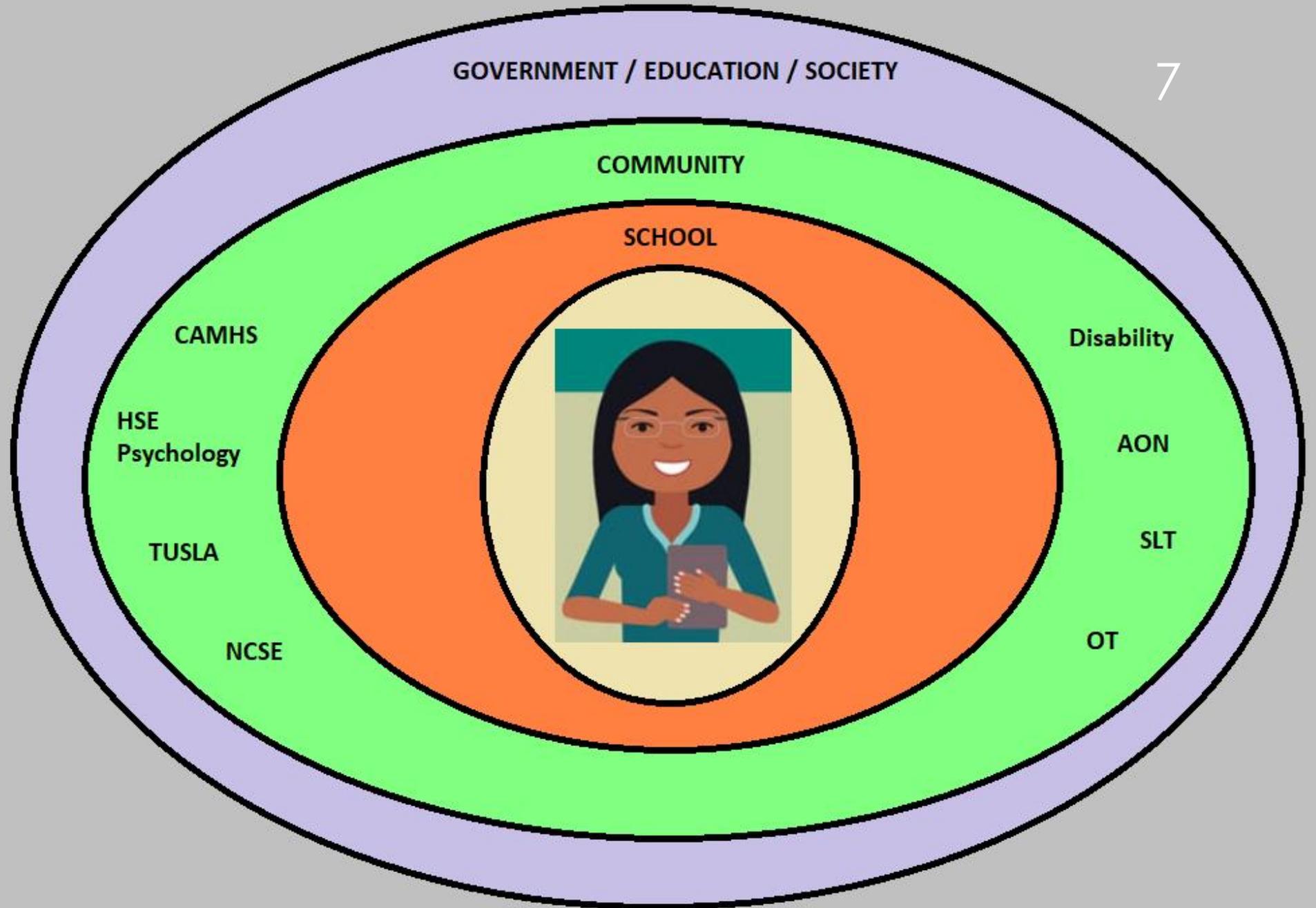
- Evidence-based practice
- Whole system – (Family, school)
- Individual / groups
- VIG/VERP
- Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT)
- Person-Centred Planning
- Solution Focused Brief Therapy
- Psychodynamic
- Personal Construct Psychology

# Systems - Support & Development

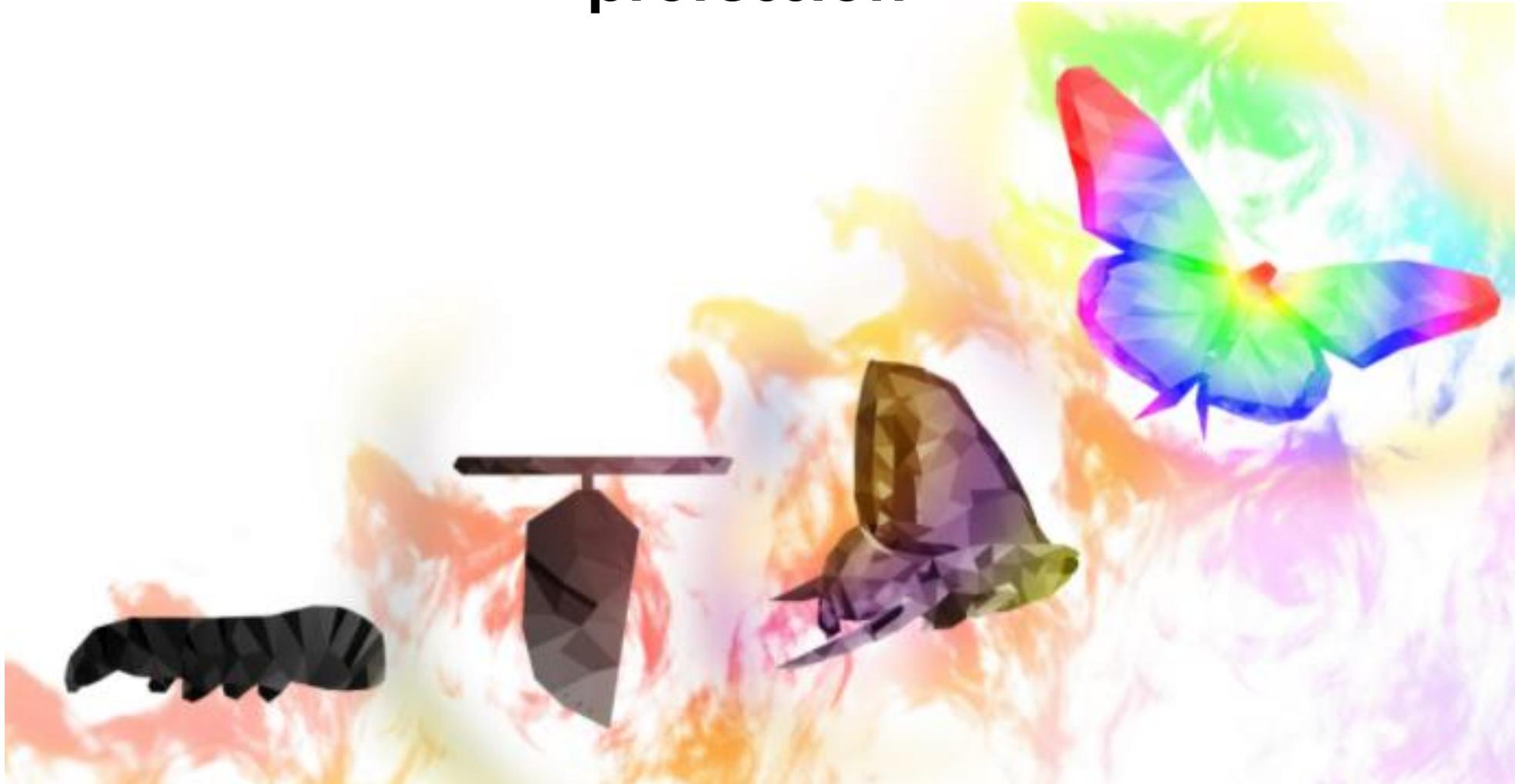
- ▶ **Building capacity among school staff or family to meet children's needs**
  - ▶ Inter-agency working - e.g., Children in care
  - ▶ Preventative work and evidence based programmes – e.g., anxiety, school reluctance, Autism
  - ▶ Understanding language and literacy development
  - ▶ Parenting support
  - ▶ Developing trauma-informed schools
  - ▶ Behaviour management programmes
  - ▶ Critical Incidents in schools – First responders for school communities



# EPs work within systems



# Educational Psychology as an evolving profession



# Organisation of the NEPS Service

**Director – Anne Tansey**

**8 Regions/Regional Directors**

**23 offices**

**37 teams**

**235 Psychologists**

**Budget 2022 (+54)**

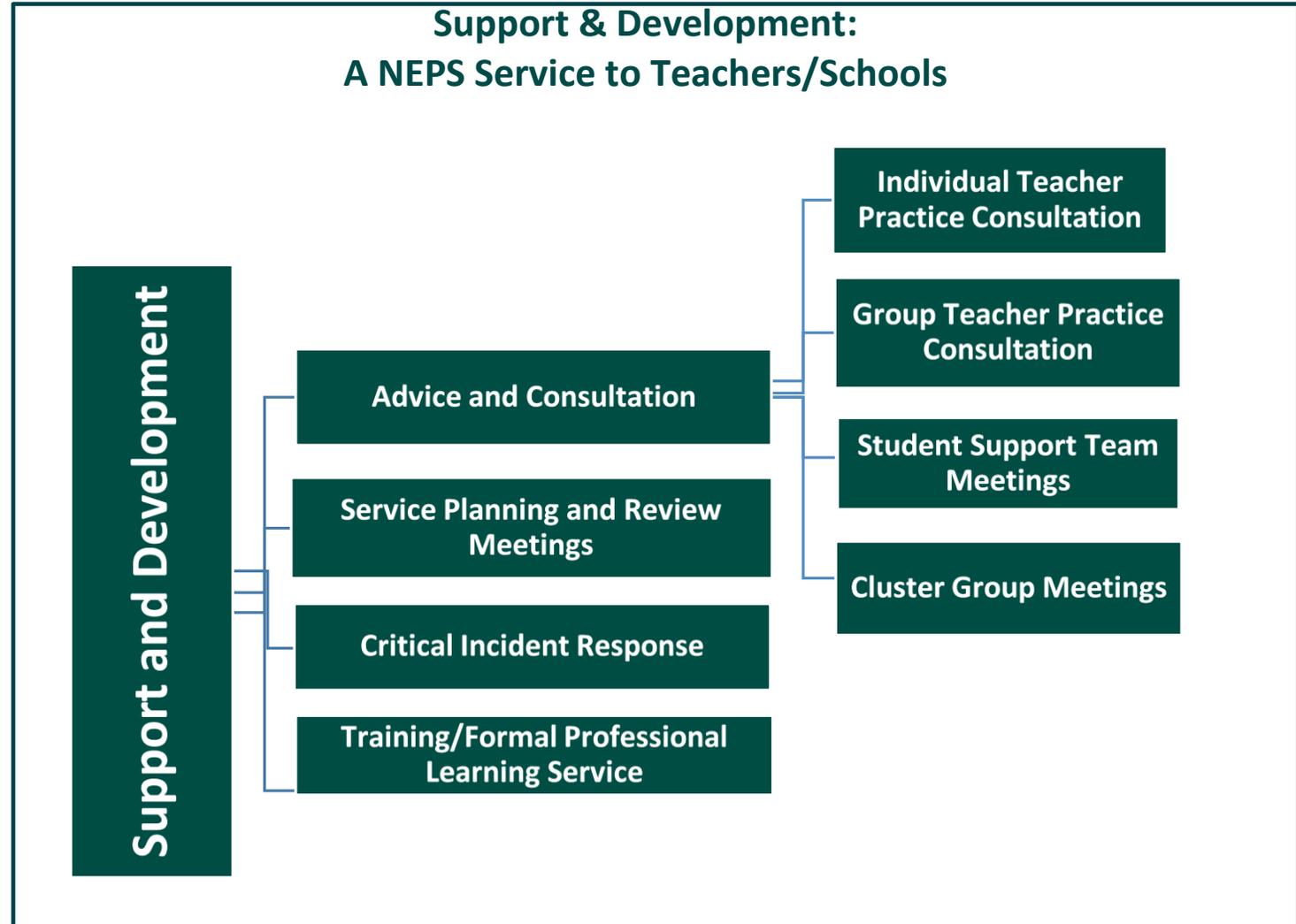
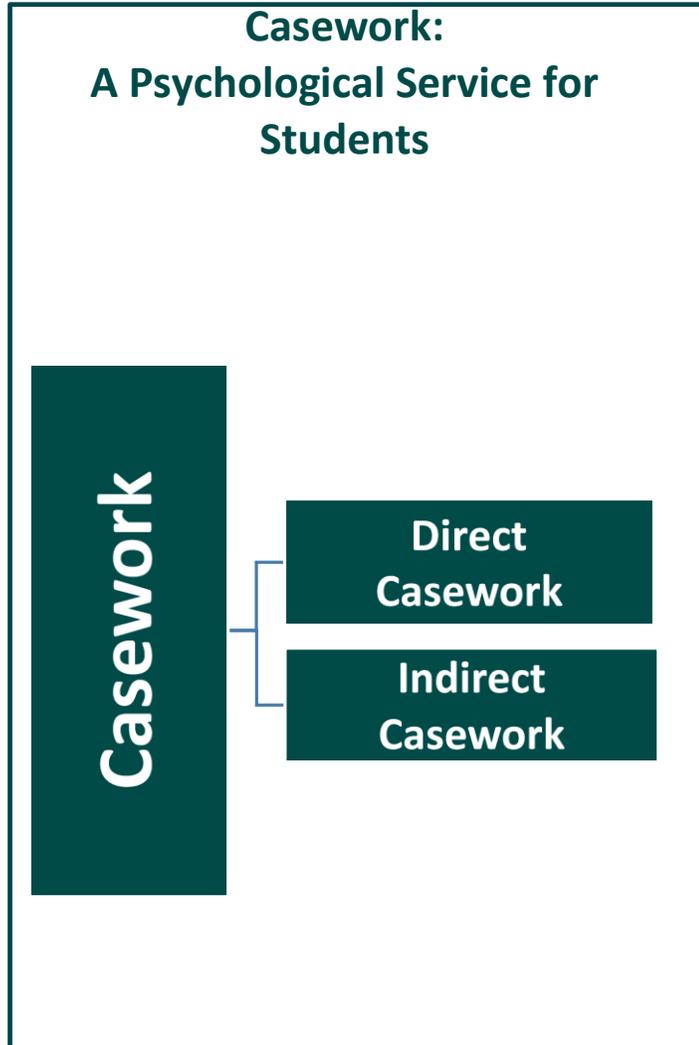


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# NEPS Model of Service



# NEPS Service to Schools

## 1. Casework (80% of our work)

- **Indirect:** Consultation about a child with parents/school staff to build capability to support improved outcomes for the child

- **Direct:** Psychologist works directly with the child (assessment/intervention) plus consultation about a child with parents/school staff to build capability to support improved outcomes for the child

- **Early Intervention /Prevention focus**
- **Less time intense**
- **Greater reach**
- **Capacity Building**

1%

c.9000

- **Often complex cases**
- **More time intense**
- **Capacity Building**



# NEPS Service to Schools

## 2. Support & Development Work (20% of our work)

- **Critical Incident Response**
- **Cluster Group Meetings** for Teachers of Autistic Children, Special Education Teachers (SET), teachers working with children with selective mutism and Teachers in Special Schools – communities of practice
- **Group Consultation for Teachers** in clusters of small primary schools.
- **Teachers Practice Consultation**
- **Student Support Team Meetings**
- **Service Planning Meetings with Schools**
- **Training/formal professional learning opportunities** to address national priorities as well as providing tailored/bespoke training to schools in relation to:
- IYTCM/FRIENDS/Get Up Stand Up/Reluctant School Attendance/Meeting the needs of students with autism/Action Research projects on improving literacy skills/Understanding and managing behaviour/Trauma informed practice in schools/Anxiety Reduction/Delivering and embedding the Friends Programme...



36%

c.25000

- **Increases reach**
- **Helps embed improved teacher practice**
- **Increases school capacity to support NEPS casework service**

# Working within NEPS?



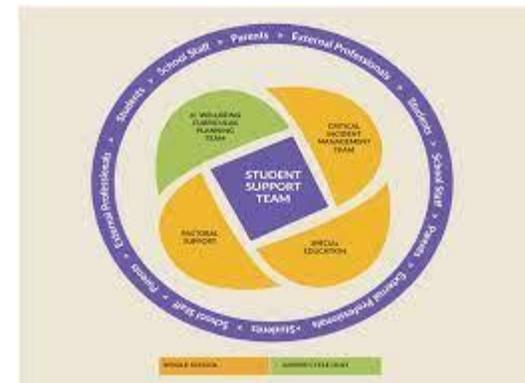
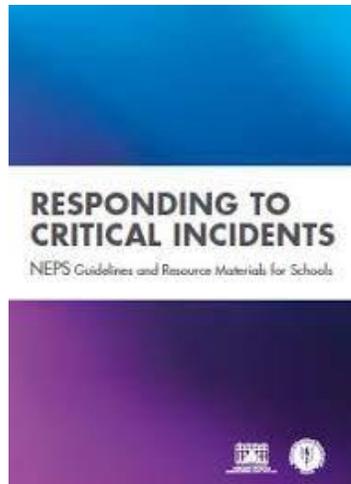
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- ▶ Variety of work – individual, group and systems level
- ▶ Work as a Team of Psychologists
- ▶ Autonomy in approach to practice and interests
- ▶ Special Interest Working Groups
- ▶ Support and Supervision – individual and group
- ▶ CPD as practitioner Psychologists –  
- national, regional and personal level
- ▶ Transparent and fair work allocation



# A day/week in the life of an EP in NEPS



# Is Educational Psychology for me?

- ▶ School based service and building relationships
- ▶ Working with children, teachers and parents in a non-clinical environment
- ▶ Direct and Indirect Casework
- ▶ Applying psychological theories to education
- ▶ Consideration of culture and diversity in our work
- ▶ Psychological assessment and intervention
- ▶ Influence at school system level and at government policy level
- ▶ Opportunities to continue research to inform practice





## Professional Doctorate in Educational Psychology

Research Ethics Review

Special Needs Assistants

In line with international practice, professional training in Educational Psychology at the School of Education is now offered at doctoral level, in the form of a Professional Doctorate in Educational Psychology (D Ed Psych).

Course Code	W334
Duration	3 years Full-time
Closing date of Entry	Friday, March 31st, 2023
Director	Dr Joyce Senior
Contact	<a href="mailto:educationenquiries@ucd.ie">educationenquiries@ucd.ie</a>
Programme Administrator	Sarah Walshe

### Overview Of The Programme

The Professional Doctorate in Educational Psychology will prepare students to work as educational psychologists. It involves taught components, extensive professional placement experience and the conducting of research at doctoral level. The research will involve the completion of a 30,000 word thesis. The course is being offered full-time over three years. Some modules will be delivered online and there will also be online tutorial support. This course is being offered at Level 10 within the National Framework for Qualifications (NFQ) and will carry a total of 270 Credits. As a professional training course, application will be made to the Psychological Society of Ireland (PSI) for accreditation when it has commenced.

# Professional Training



## Doctorate in Educational and Child Psychology Frequently Asked Questions

# Professional Training

### What are the entry requirements?

#### 1. Academic Qualification

Applicants will have a minimum upper second class honours (2.1) degree in psychology or an equivalent qualification, recognised by the Psychological Society of Ireland or equivalent, as conferring eligibility for Graduate Membership.

AND

#### 2. Experiential Component

An equivalent of two year's relevant full-time experience working in the field of education or psychology or both is required (Psychological Society of Ireland, 2010).

#### 3. Interview

Short-listing of applicants for interview normally occurs. Applicants will be shortlisted on the basis of requirements 1, 2 and 3 (if applicable) above. Short listed applicants will be assessed by a panel, to include the Course Director, the core course team and, where feasible, representation of the placement supervisors (PSI, 2010). The selection panel will pay particular attention to the personal suitability of applicants to work with children (PSI, 2010, p.10). In

## Doctorate in Educational, Child & Adolescent Psychology



DOCTORATE IN EDUCATIONAL,  
CHILD & ADOLESCENT  
PSYCHOLOGY

DECAP

DOCTORATE IN EDUCATIONAL, CHILD &  
ADOLESCENT PSYCHOLOGY

[Applying to the Course](#)

[Shortlisting of 2022 Applications](#)

[Meet our staff](#)

# Professional Training

# Relevant experience working with children and young people

- ▶ \*Education Wellbeing/Mental Health Practitioner - NEPS
- ▶ Education experience - Teacher, Special Needs Assistant (SNA), Autism class, Special schools, Early Childhood
- ▶ Assistant Psychologists – HSE
- ▶ Third Level Colleges – Disability offices
- ▶ Research / Research Assistants
- ▶ Voluntary Work – Childline, Barretstown, Samaritans

# Interview Prep for Doctoral Training

- ▶ Article review and abstract summary
- ▶ Research – how you are keeping yourself informed
- ▶ Presentation of research you have undertaken
- ▶ Applying psychology to your current work
- ▶ Code of Ethics – Ethical question
- ▶ Research proposal



# Any questions?



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# Thank you for listening



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## Psychology Conversion Courses Information

Maynooth University  
Dublin City University  
University of Limerick  
University of Galway\*  
University College Cork\*  
University College Dublin\*  
Trinity College Dublin\*  
Dublin Business School\*  
Queen's University Belfast\*  
University of Ulster\*

\*Open to students from any degree

