

Service Level Agreement (terms, conditions and operational protocols) between Real Psychology and Purchasing / Commissioning Organisation:

This agreement describes the general terms, conditions and operational protocols to accompany any formal contractual arrangement Real Psychology (as part of Real Group (UK) Ltd.) may enter into with clients purchasing or commissioning services. It is also intended to provide a quick guide to services currently offered, coupled with a brief description of the way Real Psychology (RP) psychologists will work with you, with your organisation and with pupils and other clients.

What we do:

RP psychologists and practitioners will work with individual children, young people or adults, in a home, school or agency setting. Collaboration is at the heart of our approach, and we will work with you to develop flexible and creative strategies to promote positive change in behaviour and thinking at individual, group or systemic levels. We apply psychology to support children and young people with all types of special and additional need including learning and cognitive development, social, emotional and behavioural needs, identified syndromes such as Autism and children with a range of speech and language, visual, sensory and other impairments, as well as children with any type of physical disability.

Also central to our work is the notion that children's needs are often powerfully mediated by the dynamic human and physical environment around them, so our work as applied psychologists very frequently extends to those who live and work with children and young people, such as school staff and families.

More information on Real Psychology, and links to other sections of Real Group can also be found by following this link: <http://www.realpsychology.co.uk/>

Summary of services offered by Real Psychology and operational models used:

RP practitioners will broadly work within the framework described below, which outlines a highly versatile and well validated model of delivery (widely considered to be 'best practice') for psychologists supporting the learning, social and emotional development of children and young people within schools and community settings.

Consultancy and advice

Consultation is at the heart of the Real Psychology delivery model. It enables clarity of purpose, identification of relevant issues, problem solving and work planning, client centred approaches and collaborative thinking. Consultation can be at the level of the individual child, group (e.g. class) or whole system (school or organisation). It takes into account individual psychological differences as well as the dynamic context(s) within which the child is operating. Consultation

can be delivered in a variety of ways, including using structured formats such as Signs of Wellbeing and solution focused approaches. Consultation may lead to further work such as assessment, advice or training, or it may constitute a meaningful intervention in its own right. Apart from children and young people themselves, parents / carers will be, in the vast majority of cases, critical participants and contributors to any consultation process undertaken by the Psychologist.

Assessment and Intervention

Psychological assessment may take a number of forms, and can include insights and understandings obtained through consultations, as well as more formal information gathered through observation; testing or contextual data such as attainment levels provided by schools and parent's perceptions of their child's development and needs. A critical part of any psychological assessment is an analysis of the context in which the child is operating, rather than a narrow focus on within child factors. In accordance with good practice guidelines originally developed by the British Psychological Society, assessments undertaken by RP psychologists will by definition incorporate a holistic and interactionist perspective in order to better help resolve the issues that are facing them.

Currently there is a statutory requirement for the provision of Psychological Advice as part of the Statementing (i.e. Statutory Assessment) process. In general this formal duty still falls upon Educational Psychologists who are employed within local authority settings. Whilst this may change as a result of future legislative changes now being developed within the DfE, LA EPs also have a duty to consult with any other psychologist who has worked previously with any particular child or young person undergoing the statementing process. In such circumstances, where they have had previous involvement, Real Group psychologists will contribute fully to any statutory process being undertaken and will endeavour to collaborate effectively with the responsible LA Psychologist. Real Psychology also offers an expert witness service for complex cases that may result in court proceedings.

Since qualifying many RP psychologists will have received additional practitioner training and in most cases have additional skills enabling them to deliver specific interventions in the following areas:

- Cognitive Behavioural Therapy
- Counselling
- Brief and Solution Focussed approaches
- Personal Construct Psychology
- Narrative Therapy
- Systemic approaches
- Supervision and Coaching

Services relating to any of the above areas, along with other psychological specialisms may be negotiated and commissioned from Real Psychology (subject to practitioner availability).

Monitoring and Data analysis

RP psychologists are skilled in auditing and evaluation and are all trained in research methodology. This means they will be able to assist in designing research briefs and undertaking data gathering and analysis. Specific projects can be developed and where required, more formal research may be commissioned via links with the London University post

graduate training providers. Where required, we will also undertake an audit of your current provision to meet the psychological and additional / special educational needs of your pupils with a view to improving and if desired redesigning your current offer to pupils and their families.

Training, professional development and projects

RP Psychologists are experienced deliverers of training and professional development and are able to cover all aspects of children's cognitive, social and emotional development, and psychological well-being more generally. Professional development programmes can be designed at a bespoke level according to your needs, or you may wish to consider some of the blended and e-learning courses already available from Real Training.

Organisational Support

Creating optimal working environments, by choosing the right people to employ, developing staff teams and designing and facilitating feedback systems, are critical to the effective functioning and positive dynamic of any school or organisation. Real Psychologists have the applied psychological skills to support these systemic areas of work, which can be provided on a project led or ongoing basis according to need.

Our staff:

Real Psychology / Real Group will provide staff who meet or are subject to the following:

- 1) Psychologists who are fully qualified to practice in the UK, i.e. at the statutory minimum to be registered with the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) permitting them to use one of the protected vocational titles that relate to applied psychologists. They may also be registered with professional bodies such as the British Psychological Society and be entered onto other voluntary registers e.g. as Chartered Psychologists. These safeguards ensure that the practitioner conforms to published professional and ethical standards and that there is a process for redress should any client feel that the service that they have received falls below the published standards.
- 2) All psychologists will have undertaken Disclosure and Barring Service checks and will be willing to share any relevant documents confidentially with those staff designated to do so within a client organisation.
- 3) All RP Psychologists will be appropriately and professionally supervised, will have engaged in Continuing Professional Development (CPD) in accordance with standards laid down by the HCPC and will not undertake work beyond their levels of professional competency and training. Many psychologists working in school settings are likely to have a background in Educational Psychology, but in certain circumstances there are areas of work that may equally be undertaken by appropriately trained and experienced Counselling, Clinical or Occupational Psychologists, or practitioners in allied fields such as Art and Music Therapy.
- 4) RP psychologists will endeavour to work flexibly, collaboratively, respectfully and openly with clients at all times and will anticipate client reciprocity in respect of this. Any issues that may arise will be raised openly with a view to problem solving and resolution. Following this, in the unlikely event of issues remaining, they may be referred to Real Psychology management and its equivalent within the client organisation for joint discussion and resolution.
- 5) RP Psychologists will work within established and validated professional frameworks that are in accordance with best practice (for more details see 'Operational Models of Working' below). Psychologists will, where appropriate, base their formulation, professional views

and opinions on the best available analysis and on the most current and relevant empirical research.

- 6) Our team of psychologists are all covered by Real Group's Indemnity Insurance policy, which insures against all employer and public / products liabilities and also provides professional indemnity insurance (full details on request). Any written or digitally recorded data will be stored securely and on encrypted servers and storage devices. It is company policy to store and archive all data digitally wherever possible.

How we will work with you / how to make the most of psychology services commissioned from Real Group

As with any working arrangement, clarity about working conditions and protocols are essential to help ensure that the work of Real Psychology and its staff is of the highest quality.

What schools can expect of Real Psychology, and what we expect from you:

A dedicated link Psychologist / account manager

All schools and other organisations purchasing or commissioning a service from Real Psychology will have a named link psychologist who will act as a single point of referral for all matters of service delivery, and will also operate as the 'account manager' on behalf of Real Psychology. Not all work in a particular school or institution will necessarily be carried out by a single individual as circumstances may require a range of psychological inputs which Real Psychology can access for you from our own staff pool of highly experienced and trained EPs covering a range of specialisms. In addition, Real Psychology can access psychologists from allied disciplines (e.g. occupations, clinical etc) if required for a particular piece of work.

Management of sickness, leave of absence or maternity leave:

In the event of an RP psychologist having to cancel an appointment due to short-term sickness or other unavoidable circumstance, completion of work may need to be re-negotiated at a later date. The arrangement of short term cover is not always possible immediately (unlike teaching supply cover), but Real Psychology will endeavour to meet all commitments in such circumstances, and will keep schools / other clients informed about progress with regard to this. For longer term leave of absence or maternity leave, where necessary Real Psychology will endeavour to recruit suitable high calibre staff on a temporary basis to cover the leave period. If there is any hiatus in service delivery that cannot be covered in a timely way, schools will not be charged for services agreed but not delivered.

Travel

When providing a peripatetic service travel may be a feature in working arrangements. The time for travel from one place to another may need to be taken into consideration when work arrangements are negotiated, and included in contractual arrangements if appropriate.

Work planning and future commissioning

In order to make the best use of purchased or commissioned time, it is highly recommended that periodic review and planning meetings are held between the RP Psychologist (as account manager) and relevant staff from the school or other organisation to enable the following to take place:

- Review work undertaken to date (this will include feedback on previously agreed interventions, the need for any ongoing psychological involvement and what the nature of future involvement might be).
- Consult with regard to any new concerns that have arisen since the last meeting and develop an understanding of current issues and ways to address them.
- Agree broad work plans for any forthcoming commissioning period (to include the range and breadth of work to be undertaken, realistic estimations of time required to complete the work and any associated administration, preferred modes of feedback and dates for when work will take place.
- Where the current commissioning period is coming to an end to discuss future needs and how Real Psychology might be able to help in meeting the identified needs and related requirements. Periodically we will ask for feedback on the service delivered by the RP Psychologist both as part of a quality assurance process and also to inform your future commissioning requirements.

The Involvement of Parents and Carers

Real Psychology considers that parents and carers are crucial partners in any work that relates to children for whom they have parental responsibility. This may include absent or non-resident parents. Unless there are clear and agreed reasons to the contrary, it is anticipated that any major consultation or assessment involving an individual child will at minimum include a consultation with parents / carers. In most cases it is appropriate that this occurs as part of a three way process involving school staff also. Where there is considerable statutory and / or multi agency involvement it may be appropriate for such a meeting to extend to other relevant professional colleagues in order to enable collaborative and shared work to be of maximum benefit. It is Real Psychology policy that no individual work will be undertaken without the express agreement of parents and carers. In general it is expected that the school or other commissioning organisation will facilitate any such agreements / permissions where they are required on the grounds that it is they who have the primary working relationship with them.

Communication and written feedback and reports

Real Psychology will provide feedback on work undertaken in schools, in a form that is negotiated in advance with the school. This could take the form of verbal feedback to school staff and parents, a short written summary of the school visit, or individual records of consultation where it has been agreed that they are necessary. It should be noted that time required to write records of consultation and statutory reports (and other administration time) will be charged at the same rate as for direct contact. Schools may wish to consider with the RP psychologist whether lengthy written records or reports are the most desirable use of commissioned time, or whether more concise feedback will suffice. In all cases the time needed to complete the advice should be factored in during the work planning / commissioning process. As a rough rule of thumb the ratio between direct contact time and write up / administration work should be approximately 50:50.

Schools and other commissioners can expect that Real Psychology will maintain good communication with other agencies or services, and particularly those where there has been the involvement of a psychologist from an allied or parallel service such as a local authority EPS or CAMH service. In addition, where appropriate and as part of an agreed work plan, the RP Psychologist will be prepared to attend multi agency meetings in order to provide input relating to any relevant work they have undertaken.

Working arrangements in schools:

To maximise the effectiveness of psychological work and to ensure the delivery of this service level agreement, it is anticipated that the following will be facilitated or made available by schools:

- Provision of information about Real Psychology services (including this document) to the SENCo or other relevant members of staff to ensure that they are aware of and in agreement with the way Real Psychology works within schools and with pupils and families.
- Work with children / young people that may require psychological input ideally should be consulted upon wherever possible in advance with the RP psychologist in order to determine appropriateness of any referral and, if agreed, the plan of work and outcomes sought.
- Full discussion regarding the need for involvement of the RP Psychologist should be undertaken by schools with parents / carers, and where appropriate pupils, prior to any consultation or other piece of work taking place. It is the expectation that schools will undertake routine liaison regarding the organisation of any work that may take place on school premises. A link to the Real Psychology website, or a copy of our brochure, should be provided for parents unfamiliar with the service to enable them to better understand how we will work in partnership with them and their child.
- An individual pupil work plan will almost always include a parents / carers - and school consultation meeting. Parents are a very important part of the consultation process. As school staff will have already established communication links with pupils' parents, it is expected that schools will contact and invite parents to meetings. Individual pupil's views are also an extremely important part of the consultation process and wherever possible these will be elicited (in a way appropriate to their developmental and maturational levels) as part of any consultation or assessment.
- Schools should ensure that relevant teachers and staff members, and where appropriate pupils, are aware of an EP visit in advance and are thus prepared.
- Wherever possible, involved staff to be permitted protected time for a consultation meeting with the EP and, where appropriate parents / carers / other professionals.
- Schools should, if required, be able to provide a quiet, suitable space for the psychologist to undertake consultations and other work where this has been agreed. A distraction free environment is essential for some forms of assessment. Similarly, the environment needs to be such that confidentiality is ensured for pupils and families.
- Jointly agreed outcomes to be shared with relevant staff, parents/carers and pupils as appropriate.

Other important issues to note:

- Supervision, professional development and other line management functions will be provided or organised through Real Psychology, to whom any concerns should be raised at the earliest possible opportunity.
- Where schools are also receiving a psychological service from another provider, our psychologists will be very happy to engage with them and to ensure that there is an effective practitioner partnership to ensure the most effective and productive use of their time.

- A minimum of 3 months' notice (i.e. written commitment) in advance of delivery to ensure the availability of service capacity. Annual commissions in advance are strongly encouraged.
- There are limited opportunities to purchase psychological services on an ad hoc basis, but this cannot be guaranteed and will depend on the availability of practitioner capacity at the time of the request.
- A session (half day) is 3 hours working time equivalent (i.e. excluding lunch and reasonable breaks). In certain instances travel time and related practicalities may need to be taken into account e.g. when planning and developing work plan specifications.
- All costs that can reasonably be predicted to be agreed in advance in writing, which will form the basis of formal contractual agreement. Variations may be negotiated on either side where there is agreement and reasonable grounds to do so. Formal commitments e.g. with regard to the prompt payment of invoices, refunds, additional charges etc. will be contained in the contractual agreement, of which this document is a component.