



North Warwickshire & Coventry Dyslexia Association

# Understanding the Educational Psychologist's Assessment

Registered Charity No. 1012070

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Why do some parents take their child to a private Educational Psychologist (EP)?

- Some parents feel that they do not fully understand the dyslexic difficulties that their child is experiencing.
- Some parents feel that their child's school do not understand the difficulties that their child is having and is under-estimating the difficulties.
- The parents feel that they need evidence to speak to their child's school with more confidence.

How much does a full assessment by an EP cost?

Anything from £300 to £500.

Is a private assessment by an EP essential?

**No.** If you feel that you understand the difficulties that your child is experiencing, both in school and at home, and that your child is getting support at school, then it is unlikely that an assessment by a private EP is necessary.

**How do I find an EP?**

The British Psychological Society publishes a register and Directory of Chartered Educational Psychologists, or you could go directly to Dyslexia Action (formerly Institute) who employ EPs to assess children and adults.

When you have found an Educational Psychologist

- It is important to check that the EP is Chartered. This ensures that the EP that you have chosen is fully qualified.
- Check that the EP that you choose has a certificate to state a recent check by the CRB (Criminal Records Bureau).
- Ensure that you have made these checks before asking about costs and what you will get for your fee.

An assessment normally takes over an hour, the EP should be willing to discuss the findings, briefly, on the same day, and then you should receive a written report later.

- Ask whether you will be able to have your report explained to you after you have received it.

## The Educational Psychologist's Assessment

What is being assessed?

- The tests given assess the following: underlying ability, thinking, organising and planning, using words and patterns; vocabulary; reading, writing, spelling; memory; sound skills.
- The result is a 'profile' - a unique pattern of strengths and weaknesses - from which an experienced psychologist can see whether or not your child is dyslexic, and what should be done to help.

What tests best identify dyslexia?

An EP may use either:

- One of the Wechsler battery of IQ tests, (Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children, 3rd edition, is the most common one).
- Or the British or Differential Ability Scales. Both will yield an overall IQ score and separate IQ scores for verbal and performance (non-verbal) ability, which enables the assessor to compare the subject with the child's peers. The verbal IQ is recognised as the best predictor of future academic achievement.

### REMEMBER

The main reason for your child being assessed is to enable everyone:- you, your child's teachers and school, and especially your child, to understand his / her difficulties.

The assessment will not guarantee that your child will need or get additional provision in school or in external examinations. This will depend on the severity of your child's difficulties.

It is important, though, that your child is able to develop strategies that will enable him / her to grow in to a confident adult able to cope with everyday life.

Further Reading

"Psychobabble - A Parents' Guide to Psychological Reports"

By Stephanie LORENZ

This is currently out of print (Oct 2012) try asking your local library to obtain a copy for you.

For further information contact NWCD A Helpline :-

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