

Cllr Clare Curran
C/o Members' Room
County Hall
Penrhyn Road
Kingston upon Thames
KT1 2DN

8th May 2018

Dear Councillor Curran,

Educational Psychology (EP)Service

Like all Surrey primary schools we have a number of children who have learning difficulties. We do all we can to support them to ensure their rate of progress matches that of their peers. Sometimes though we need a bit of help and at those times we rely on the County's Educational Psychologists. Actually, that is not quite true; the reality is that we *used to* rely on them but alas no longer because for the past 18 months there has been no EP service available to Mole Valley schools, except for statutory and emergency work. For a time we were very generously offered the chance to hire a Surrey EP for around £560 a day, however so many schools chose that option that the system collapsed as demand swamped supply. It has now been withdrawn.

Meanwhile we have Paediatricians at Epsom Hospital telling parents that their child needs an EP assessment and those parents then asking why we have done nothing about it. The choice facing us is to find our own EP and pay for an assessment ourselves or recommend to parents that they do this themselves. Not many of our families can afford to do that. What makes this really galling is that just a few miles down the road in Elmbridge, schools are offered two days of EP support each term and these schools regard the EP service as one of the best they receive from Surrey.

We appreciate that there is a shortage of Educational Psychologists wishing to work in the public sector currently and Surrey County Council is facing extreme financial pressures. However we cannot understand why those EPs working for Surrey cannot be used across the whole county rather than only in one quadrant. This situation is completely unacceptable to us as this inability or refusal of officers to deploy the available EPs across the whole county has created a postcode lottery in which the children of South East Surrey in general and those in Mole Valley in particular are missing out.

As Cabinet Member for children and a Mole Valley County Councillor we would be very grateful if you could use your influence to address this unsatisfactory situation before more of our children, for whom learning is already far from straightforward, fail to be assessed formally and receive the additional support the need.

Yours sincerely,

Cc Dave Hill Executive Director for Children, Families and Learning
Cllr Chris Townsend, County Councillor for Ashtead and member of the children and education select committee.

