
THE ROLE OF THE CLINICAL CHILD PSYCHOLOGIST

What is a Clinical Child Psychologist?

Clinical Child Psychologists work with children, young people and families with a wide range of behavioural and emotional problems. They see children up to school leaving age. Typical reasons for referral include anxiety, phobias, temper tantrums, behaviour problems, toileting problems, obsessive behaviour, eating disorders and bereavement. Referrals are also made for children with neuropsychological problems (e.g. head injury or epilepsy) or health problems (e.g. diabetes). There is a specialist service for children with learning disabilities and/or Asperger's Syndrome or Autism.

Clinical Psychologists have specialised in using psychological ideas to help people with problems. Psychology is the study of people's behaviour, thoughts and feelings. Clinical Psychologists first complete a university degree in psychology then go on to postgraduate clinical training. Clinical CHILD Psychologists have specialised in working with children, young people and their families. (Note: People often confuse psychologists and psychiatrists: a psychiatrist's background training is in medicine.)

Clinical Child Psychologists will often work alongside other health colleagues, including paediatricians, psychiatrists, speech and language therapists, primary mental health workers. They will also make links with Educational Psychologists when appropriate. Educational Psychologists have specialised in working with children in the school environment.

How is the service organised?

There are two different departments providing Clinical Child Psychology Services, one providing services to children with Autism, Asperger's Syndrome and/or learning disabilities and the other providing a generic service for all other children. Both provide services across Highland with outreach clinics in Badenoch & Strathspey, Caithness, Fort William, Ross-shire, Skye & Lochalsh, Sutherland and the West Coast margins.

Clinical Psychology Service for Children and Young People with Autistic Spectrum Disorders and/or Learning Disabilities:

Morven House, Raigmore Hospital, Inverness, IV2 3UJ. Tel: 01463 701302

Clinical Psychology Service for Children and Young People

Alligin Centre, Larch House, Stoneyfield, Inverness, IV2 7PA. Tel: 01463 704665

How do children get referred?

Both services accept referrals from all other health professionals and social work, as well as occasionally accepting referrals from education services or direct from families themselves.