

Meet the EPSO Team

Sue Warner - Head of the EPSO Team

Sue is a highly experienced teacher of students with a wide range of SEND and has been Principal of Melland High School, an outstanding specialist support high school, for the last eight years. During that time Sue has supported and mentored Headteachers and Senior Leaders from other similar schools focusing on curriculum development and improving outcomes for young people with profound & complex learning needs.



Sue leads and manages the Bright Futures Educational Psychologists & Specialist Outreach team, which provides targeted support and relevant CPD across our trust academies for pupils with SEND. She has recently overseen the completion of a state-of-the-art expansion of the school, further enhancing the provision for over 250 Melland students, enabling their needs to be met both effectively and creatively.

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Dr Adam Rumble – Educational Psychologist

Adam qualified as an Educational Psychologist and joined Bright Futures in 2014. Before training to become an Educational Psychologist, Adam studied Forensic Psychology and Criminal Justice, and worked in a range of psychology and education-related roles, including three years as an Assistant Psychologist and Therapies Assistant at a residential school for children with complex learning needs.



Adam works 0.7fte for Bright Futures and is seconded to work 0.3fte as an Academic and Professional Tutor on the Doctorate in Educational and Child Psychology at the University of Manchester. Adam sits on the British Psychological Society's committee of educational assessors (which involves quality-assuring courses that provide qualifications in test use).

Adam has expertise in relation to autism, sensory processing and working memory and is also involved in peer-reviewing articles for a range of educational psychology related journals. He is passionate about eliciting and understanding the views of children and young people, and using organisational psychology and working strategically to build capacity within schools.

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Dr Ric Smith – Educational Psychologist

Ric has over 15 years experience within education and has held a wide range of roles prior to qualifying as an Educational Psychologist including Class Teaching Assistant, 1:1 Teaching Assistant, Learning Mentor, Qualified Primary School Teacher, and Senior Leader within a Secondary SEND Special School.



Ric is keenly interested in supporting children, their families and staff within our trust through the adoption of person-centred approaches, the application of positive and humanistic models of psychology, and psychological theories of human motivation. Ric has a specialist interest in play, and is the commissioner of a research project exploring play provision within our trust in collaboration with the University of Manchester's Doctorate in Educational and Child Psychology Programme.

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Dr George Thomas – Educational Psychologist

George is a senior practitioner Educational Psychologist within the EPSO Team, having joined Bright Futures as a Trainee Educational Psychologist in 2013. Prior to commencing training to become an EP, George worked as a qualified teacher and taught A-level Psychology at Rochdale Sixth Form College.



George works 0.7FTE for Bright Futures and is seconded to work 0.3FTE on the Doctorate in Educational and Child Psychology at the University of Manchester as an Academic and Professional Tutor. Linked to George's university role, he also sits on the British Psychological Society's committee of educational assessors and has a role in quality-assuring courses that provide qualifications in educational test use.

George has expertise in the areas of language and literacy provision, consent within professional practice and supervision. George's research interests include autism in girls, mental health strategy and sleep.

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Sam Ebert – Trainee Educational Psychologist

Sam is a second-year Trainee Educational Psychologist (TEP) at the University of Manchester, currently conducting research into supporting children and young people experiencing Emotionally Based School Non-Attendance (EBSNA).



Before beginning his training in educational psychology, Sam gained extensive experience across a range of educational and clinical settings.

He has worked as an Educational Support Assistant providing 1:1 support for students with complex needs, and later became the SEND Transitional Coordinator within an inclusive learning department at a college, where he led annual reviews and supported EHCP processes. Sam has also held roles as an Assistant Clinical Psychologist, contributing to the autism diagnostic pathway and supporting the learning disability nursing team, and as an Assistant Educational Psychologist, working on projects related to early years, neurodevelopmental support, and EBSNA. Sam is particularly passionate about supporting CYP with their thoughts, feelings, and behaviours, and is committed to neurodiversity-affirming practices.

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Hannah Fryer – Trainee Educational Psychologist

Hannah is a third-year Trainee Educational Psychologist currently studying at The University of Manchester. Hannah has been on placement at Bright Futures since January 2024. As part of her doctorate, Hannah is conducting research into inclusion, specifically reducing school exclusions for primary-age children.



Previously, Hannah worked as an Assistant Educational Psychologist in Lancashire, where she supported a wide range of children, young people and families through assessment and intervention. Before this Hannah worked as a SEND TA in primary schools across Rochdale, working closely with autistic children, and children with other diagnoses such as OCD and ADHD. Hannah has particular interests in the areas of Autism and inclusive practice.

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Year 1 Trainee Educational Psychologist

Each academic year, a Year-1 Trainee Educational Psychologist completes a 40-day main placement with the EP Service throughout the Autumn and Spring terms.

Julie Barnett – SEND Specialist Leader of Education

Julie is the Vice Principal at Melland High School with responsibilities including strategic leadership, curriculum development, school improvement planning, CPD, IT, creative media technology and specialist interactive spaces.



Before working as a specialist teacher for pupils with SEND, Julie worked as a mainstream primary school teacher and SENDCo. Julie has led numerous SEND Diagnostic Reviews which support schools and academies to have a clear baseline assessment of their SEND provision. Julie leads the development work of the Bright Futures SEND Network which involves working closely with inclusion leads and SENDCos.

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George Roberts – SEND Specialist Leader of Education

George has worked in mainstream secondary education for 8 years as a science teacher, including being on the transition and outreach team, the second in science and the head of science. He also has 8 years teaching in special secondary education where he has led on and taught several subjects such as citizenship, science and computing.



George is currently the formal curriculum pathway lead at Melland High School which involves working with subject coordinators to develop their curriculum and assessment for subject specific learning.

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Ryan Shoesmith – SEND Specialist Leader of Education

Quality SEND practice has been a huge part of Ryan's personal and professional life from a young age, inspired by his own experiences. Ryan started out as an inclusion buddy in a school before working across the Autism community, health and social care industry and mental health services. Ryan went on to study Psychology to specialise in behaviour and child development, before completing a PGCE in Primary Education with a SEND specialism.



Ryan's career has largely focused on supporting the highest-needs cohorts with their education and addressing complex behavioural, emotional, sensory, and communication needs. Specialist Outreach has further expanded Ryan's understanding of quality SEND practice through collaboration with many inspiring services and settings in a world he is passionate about understanding and championing.

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